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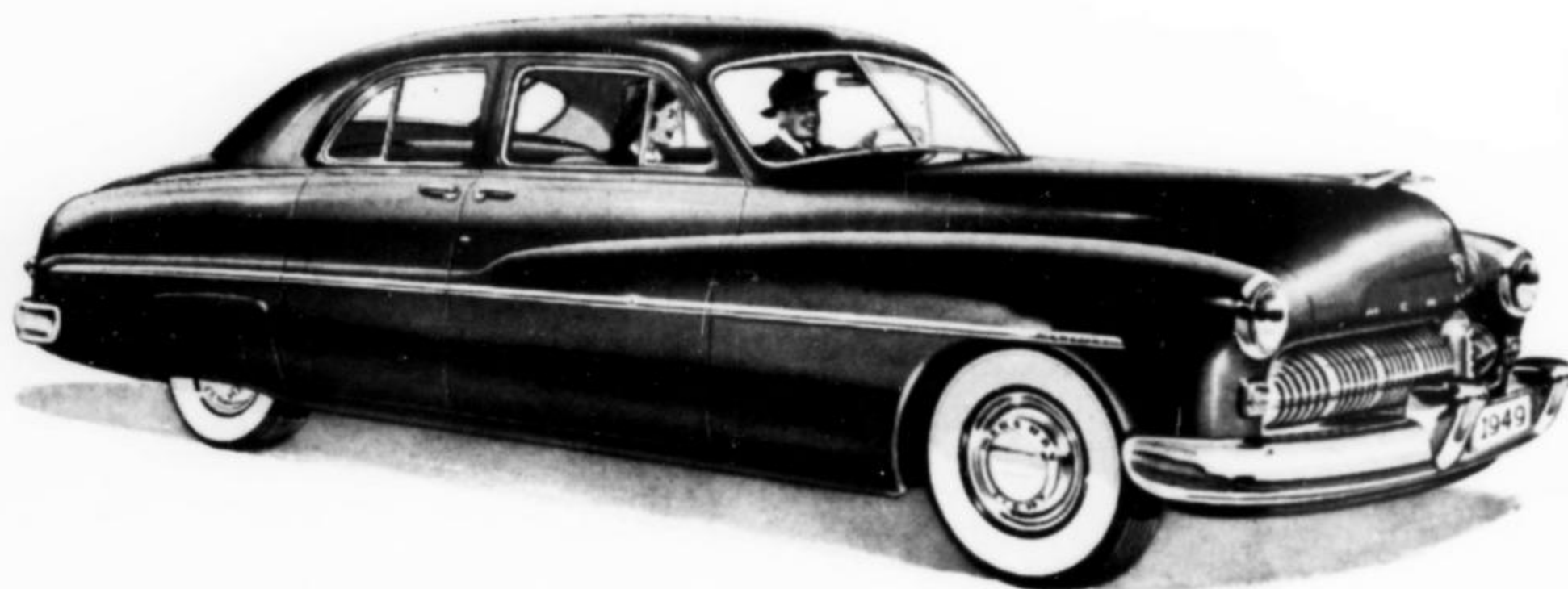
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COMMENTARY

IS EUROPE'S MIDDLE CLASS FINISHED?

The Political Future of the "Third Force"

SHERRY MANGAN

THE failure of the average American "political observer" to predict post-war Europe's sudden electoral shifts

THE development of parliamentary democracy and individual liberty was made possible above all by the vigor, intelligence, and prosperity of the middle class. The decade preceding World War II, and the war itself, marked the political submergence of that class. In the Resistance movement, and in the months following liberation, it seemed to have staged a come-back, and hopes began to be pinned on it as the "third force" between Right and Left. But as Europe's problems of reconstruction continue unsolved, and as the fervor of the Resistance wanes, uneasy questions are sharply posed. Is Europe's middle class strong enough economically to recover from the havoc of World War II? Is it self-confident enough to withstand the ideological pressures from the extreme Left and the extreme Right? Has it developed any independent program of its own? Is it likely to show the courage and leadership needed to hammer through the economic and political measures that would give Europe security with freedom? SHERRY MANGAN, who tries to answer some of these questions, has lived in Europe for much of his life, and served for over nine years as Paris correspondent for *Time* until he was expelled by the Nazis. After an assignment in South America, he returned to France, where he now lives as a free-lance writer. His article "Is DeGaulle Fascist?" in the January COMMENTARY aroused widespread comment both here and abroad. Mr. Mangan was born in Lynn, Massachusetts, in 1904.

has had one chief cause—his inability to estimate around which political tendencies the European middle class, uprooted from its traditional parties and allegiances, would, at any given moment, massively pile up. For behind these shifts, zigzags, and flipflops—as evidenced in the Labor party's victory in Britain and the sudden turns and reverses of power in French, Italian, Czechoslovak, Austrian, and other elections since 1945—the same factor is operating: the wild search of the disoriented middle class for some solution to its impasse.

Our observer can take comfort, however. There is somebody even more puzzled than he about where the European middle class is going. That is the middle-class European himself.

Jacques Bonhomme's puzzlement is, of course, more unconscious than apparent. At any moment he is, as he always has been, vocally sure of his direction. Thus, in 1948, he and other middle-class Europeans still believe that the middle class is of political importance, has a future, and possesses a program—though here unfortunately there is immediate disagreement in at least three or four ways as to what that program is.

No class willingly leaves the stage of history. It is a commonplace that doomed ruling classes go down in brutality and

blood. The European middle class, which never has ruled and never will rule, is going down in vacillation and talk.

The Long Decline

TO SAY that the middle class has never ruled does not mean that it did not have a great tradition and an important political role.

Its ideology of individualism and liberalism not only produced, in the medieval communes, the first modern experience of large-scale self-administration, but became the driving force of the bourgeois revolution that established the democratic capitalist state. And during that state's efflorescence, the middle-class ideals—Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—even though their application sometimes left a great deal to be desired, were at least firmly embedded in documents, speeches, and the pediments of public buildings.

Furthermore, up until World War I, though the economic weight of the middle class was diminishing rapidly, its political tradition was successfully outliving economic reality. Middle-class politicians were the leaders of all political parties, whatever class they represented. In France, for example, Jaurès led the Social Democrats, Clemenceau the Radical Center, and Maurras the extreme Right. Political life in Italy and Britain was dominated by such figures as Giolitti and Lloyd George. With the exception of Germany, the nobility no longer played any politically important role in Western Europe; real workingmen were very rare among political leaders; and the large capitalists, though influential as powers behind the throne, mostly looked after their businesses. Politics thus became a sort of monopoly of lawyers, professors, journalists, and other members of the middle-class professions, and there appeared, for the first time in modern European history, the figure of the professional politician. This period was, at least in appearance, the political golden age of the middle class.

World War I ended all that: the history

of the European middle class from 1914 to 1939 was one of disintegration in every area. Its economic position was shaken by inflation, depression, and industrial rationalization. Hundreds of thousands of rentiers were bankrupted. Artisans, professional men, technicians, and small businessmen were driven from prosperity to either abandonment of economic independence or a marginal existence. Intellectually trained youth, emerging from the universities, faced chronic unemployment.

Politically, these economic processes were reflected in increased social polarization—a steady growth in the political importance of the top and bottom of the social ladder at the expense of the middle. Save for vote-catching and quickly-forgotten promises at election times, the middle class felt itself a football in the struggle between capital and labor. Even its one-time monopoly of the role of professional politician disappeared with the appearance, at one extreme, of numerous worker-politicians, such as trade-union leaders and professional revolutionaries, and, at the other, of capitalists personally entering politics, such as Rathenau in Germany, De Wendel in France, Francqui in Belgium, and a whole collection of Italian bankers and British businessmen. There arose in addition two new types of professional politicians: generals, such as Ludendorff, Pilsudski, De Bono, and Franco; adventurers, such as Mussolini, Hitler, and Doriot.

But it was in the field of middle-class ideology that there was the greatest disintegration. The middle class asked only to be left alone, to be comfortable, to flourish quietly, and to carry on discussions. But this was just what the epoch would not permit.

The middle class began to fear that it would be trampled out of existence in the savage struggle between capital and labor. Increasingly disregarded and economically squeezed, it began either to doubt its own principles and go over to those of its adversaries, or else to look desperately around for some possibility of imposing its principles by force.

The Mirage of Fascism

FOR a while, fascism, because of its demagoguery, seemed to be the answer to the prayer of the middle classes. It appeared to offer a strong state power which would knock capital's and labor's heads together, which would protect the middle class from both capitalist monopolism and revolutionary egalitarianism. In point of fact, fascism did allow a certain freedom of play for the most energetic and most cynical elements of the middle class: right-wing newspapermen threw out left-wingers; Jewish doctors and lawyers were replaced by "Aryans"; fascist professors displaced socialist ones; and above all *Parteigenossen* supplanted lawyers, trade unionists, and professional politicians in the state apparatus. But the plums, the broad middle-class masses soon discovered, were far too few to go around; and their real problems not only were unsolved but grew sharper.

Economically, fascism accentuated concentration of capital and domination of monopolies, crushing craftsmen and small shopkeepers, especially in the speed-up and rationalization of preparation for war, and in the course of war itself. The middle classes found themselves being "proletarianized" at a faster rate even than before.

Politically, the middle classes soon found that, under fascism, corruption and nepotism were worse than under "rotten democracy." The sense of forming part of an aggressive group was intoxicating, but it was less fun when totalitarianism clamped down on one's own independence of thought and action, and everywhere the "discuss-advise" formula dear to the middle class was replaced by the "command-obey" one.

In the end those sentiments of frustration which had driven the middle classes to fascism were not only not eliminated but much strengthened. A general cynicism found its outlet in explosions of morbidity: sadism, sexual perversions, and Auschwitz.

It would be folly, however, to say that the middle class had been permanently cured of fascism. Squeezed between the two

historically dominant classes, the middle class seems always ready to listen to a demagogue who promises to turn the clock of history backward: to be "above classes," to "put an end to the class struggle," to bring about "national unity"—in a word, to impose from above a discipline on both capital and labor that would let the middle class breathe.

Yet one *can* say that in 1945 the middle class's break with fascism was complete in most European countries, with the possible exception of Spain.

For a century now the political life of that class in Europe had been a pendulum swing toward and away from socialism. Beginning in 1945, the swing, in disillusioned reaction from fascism, was strongly away from the extreme Right. Many went straight to the nearest approximation to socialism (as they understood it) that they could find, whether Stalinism or Social Democracy; others, for disparate reasons, took the special road of the Catholic Center; but those who most clearly and consciously reflected what remained of independent middle-class thought tried a last experiment by joining together in a party of specifically middle-class ideals—that of the "Resistance."

The Mystique of the Resistance

FOR, indeed, the most characteristic expression of middle-class politics, ideas, and ideals, under the concrete historical conditions near the war's end and immediately after the Liberation, were the "Resistance" parties such as the Partito d'Azione in Italy, the Nederlandsche Volksbeweging in Holland, the Union Démocratique Belge in Belgium, the Mouvement de Libération Nationale (later, Union Démocratique et Socialiste de la Résistance) in France. Composed exclusively of middle-class elements and led by middle-class intellectuals, they had in common:

(1) a strong tendency to individualism, whereby they maintained 19th-century features, with outstanding talents leading numerous factions in a genuine struggle for ideas—precisely the features that both fascism and Stalinism completely lack;

(2) a strong collectivist trend in economics, shown in their favoring the nationalization of banking, mining, heavy industry, etc.;

(3) militant anti-fascism and defense of democratic institutions, shown in their attempts to democratize their countries' constitutions by abolition of the upper chamber, etc., and to write in specific laws barring fascism, as well as in their insistence on the importance of education in supporting democracy and fighting totalitarianism.

This desire for a maximum of political freedom combined with a degree of state control in economy provoked a hopeless internal conflict the moment it emerged from underground. During the underground struggle against the Nazis, the elements composing these new parties had been completely lined up with Stalinism, which stood on a program very similar to their own. But with the war's end, the clear revelation of Stalinism's real role in Eastern Europe opened their eyes. In their reaction against Stalinism, they broke with Marxist collectivism as well; and, swinging in typical middle-class fashion to the opposite extreme, contributed some of their most brilliant intellectual representatives, such as Koestler and Malraux, to the dominating reactionary anti-Stalinist parties of the Right.

The brief history of these Resistance parties is a microcosm of the middle-class dilemma. Immediately following the Liberation they played an outstanding political role. In Holland and Italy they provided the first post-Liberation premiers, and in many other countries many important cabinet ministers. At this time they were hailed, by many observers who should have known better, as some sort of permanent "new force" that would make great changes. But the internal contradictions of their programs tended to split them apart, while their lack of efficient political machines left them in the position of generals without an army. And so they disappeared from the scene as a real force less than two years after their emergence.

The brief hour on the stage of the Re-

sistance parties seems conclusive evidence that the politics and ideals they stood for had no longer any possibility of winning large sectors of their own, the middle class, and that the time for independent middle-class political thought and action was definitely past.

It is of contributory significance that the author of a recent series of thoughtful articles in the London *Economist* on the political and economic situation of the British middle class, rejects for a number of sound reasons the possibility of forming a middle-class party in Britain.

Having been hoodwinked or having failed in its attempts to construct its own parties with independent middle-class programs, the European middle class, reflecting the varying objective conditions in each country and its own successive experiences and disillusion, has since the Liberation divided its loyalties unevenly among three main political tendencies: Stalinism, the Catholic Center, and Social Democracy.

Surrender to Stalinism

THE mood of that sector of the middle classes which turned to working-class socialism in its Stalinist version after Liberation was not at all the same as that of its ancestors a century or half a century earlier. The attraction of socialist ideals, which had been the determinant factor in earlier epochs, played a quite secondary role. The European middle classes turned toward Stalinism in 1945 principally because of:

(1) the appeal of the Soviet Union and her role in the defeat of Hitler, as a sort of opposite pole to fascism;

(2) the strength of the Communist parties and their dominant role in the Resistance movements; and, above all,

(3) the thoroughly revised program of Stalinism, with its insistence on middle-class rights and privileges, such as: large wage differentials for skilled personnel and technicians; defense of independent small businesses against trusts and cartels; defense of the peasantry against the increasingly anti-peasant attitudes of the industrial workers.

It is no exaggeration to characterize the European middle class's postwar trend toward Stalinism as ninety per cent realistic and opportunistic, and only ten per cent idealistic or ideological. This was particularly the case for "intellectuals." It is perhaps difficult for American intellectuals, who have lost little time in jumping on the anti-Soviet bandwagon, to understand the delay of their Western European counterparts. The answer lies in the fact that immediately after Liberation all the positions of power in the arts and the professions fell into Stalinist hands; and the boys were as quick to recognize on which side their bread was buttered as their American *semblables et frères*.

Opportunism, however, is a weak instrument with which to found a political party. Metaphorically, one might say that the floating middle class washed over the Stalinist position in the immediate post-Liberation period; and that, after the inevitable ebb the other way, only comparatively few stuck to the rough surfaces of that position. Numerically, that proportion was small, and those who in 1946 had the impression that the Communist party, in France for example, was transforming its whole social composition from working class to middle class, were, if not mistaken, at least premature. Those middle-class elements that did remain, however—constituting about ten per cent of the French Communist party (i.e., some one hundred thousand persons)—were absorbed and organized in a way of which the Popular Republicans (MRP) and the Socialists (SFIO) were quite incapable, and act now as a respectable Communist leaven within the French middle class. But in a larger sense it can be said that just that opportunism which attracted middle-class elements to Stalinism when the tide in that direction was in flood, causes them now to flow back to the perhaps more sympathetic ambiance of the MRP, the SFIO, and the Gaullist RPF.

In Eastern Europe, the appeal of Stalinism was and is more profound and far-reaching. Since in that area the role of the middle class in politics had never been determinant,

the Stalinist conquests there gave the East European middle classes, for the first time in their history, the sort of monopoly of political office and opportunity that their counterparts had long held in Western Europe. Partly for this reason, and partly because the Stalinist regime has achieved real progress in the development of education, public health, science, etc., in those countries, it has found its strongest support there among professional men, technicians, and middling well-to-do peasants.

THERE is an important common psychological factor, however, between the European middle-class trend toward Stalinism since 1945 and its trend toward fascism in the prewar period, viz: the middle class loss of faith in liberal individualist thought. Exhausted by the effort to defend himself and win intellectual clarity amid a political confusion he cannot begin to understand, the middle-class European (and not only the European, for that matter) is attracted by the self-abandon to which he is invited by the authoritarian mass solutions of either the Right or the Left. This attraction is not merely a "product of fascism," as is often claimed. It is the result also of 20th-century social conditions, of which fascism and Stalinism are themselves concomitant phenomena.

The attraction of totalitarianism operates visibly in the economic field: the craftsman or young small-businessman, after desperate and embittering struggles to protect his economic independence against the competition of the big rationalized corporation, finds a sort of masochistic pleasure in finally giving up the fight and abandoning himself, as a foreman or junior executive, to the paternalism of his former "persecutor." The extent to which this process is less pleasurable in Europe than in the United States is the measure of the short-sighted and over-greedy European cartel's backwardness in social relations compared to the rich and more imaginative American corporation with its skilful personnel policy—a policy that involves buying up independent intellectuals.

Just as in the economic field, the middle-class man in the intellectual field, after trying to defend his own brand of broad eclecticism against those narrow material powers which he considers to be without intellectual or moral values, finally feels an almost religious sense of abandon in letting himself be dictated to, and intellectually violated, by one or the other of them.

Thus, vast sectors of the European middle class now show regressive characteristics that are at total variance with their past strivings for independence: a fleeing to the powerful authoritarian solution as to a sort of father who will do all the thinking and deciding and make everything come out all right. Oddly enough, this surrender to a strong material power is usually called, by those who embrace it, "realism," while the continued defense of ideas whose realism is provable by logic, reason, and fact is termed "utopianism."

The foregoing in no way means that Stalinism has established any monopoly over middle-class action in Western or even Eastern Europe. It is, rather, the more floating and disoriented layers of the middle class that have found a reassuring solution in Stalinism.

Those who felt still tied somehow to the middle-class ideals, who had, in a certain sense, a greater class consciousness, shrank from either political extreme and attached themselves temporarily to one or the other of the two movements that have profited from the disintegration of the old (liberal) and new (Resistance) political formations of the middle class: the Catholic Center and Social Democracy.

"Solutions": 1—Christian Democracy

CATHOLIC intervention in 19th-century politics (e.g., ultramontanism in France; clericalism in Belgium, Austria, and Bavaria; the Zentrums-Partei in Hohenzollern and Weimar Germany) was made possible by a political machine closely connected with the upper clergy. The centrist base was the peasantry and politically backward workingmen. In the urban middle class as such, clerical in-

fluence was limited to those who were more religiously inclined. Only some specific issue, such as Irish, Flemish, or Polish nationalism, permitted the Catholic parties to extend their influence through broad layers of the urban middle class.

But in the 20th century, and especially after 1929, a new type of Catholic political organization—"Christian Democracy"—began to appear, basing itself mainly on the new anti-socialist Catholic trade unions and drawing much of its force from dynamic youth or workers' youth organizations. This new form of Catholic political action often comes into friction or even open conflict with the upper clergy; but it can on the other hand count on the devotion and self-sacrificing efforts of "new apostles"—urban and rural priests who concentrate on social work: education, youth organization, social insurance, public health, etc. Its ideology breaks sharply with such conservative trends in Catholic thought as were represented in the 19th century by Bonald and la Tour du Pin, and sets itself up rather as a liberal and humanitarian progressive tendency.

Before World War II the influence of this kind of Catholic action was limited mainly to Holland and Belgium. Today, however, it appears momentarily as the outstanding political force among urban and rural middle classes of Italy, France, Holland, Belgium, Norway, Germany, and Austria; and also as the main rallying point of non-Communists in Eastern Europe.

The role of this new force in the Resistance immediately before Liberation contributed to its present importance. Another factor was religious revivalism during the occupation years. The participation of women, immemorably under the influence of priests, in postwar elections, was still a further one.

But the most important factor was the moral one: once the bankruptcy of fascism and ultra-nationalism became evident to the middle class, Catholicism was the only system of morality with a strong organizational apparatus that remained unreservedly opposed to Marxism. As such, it became a ral-

lying point for non- or anti-Marxist forces, Catholic and otherwise.

The Christian-Democrat leaders are not naively over-principled: indeed, the evolution of their political ideas is a revealing lesson in tough-minded opportunism. In the Resistance they cleverly adapted themselves to the then prevailing slogans, such as the establishment of a unified trade-union movement in Italy and the nationalization of industry in France, and everywhere they were considered to be, on the whole, "progressive" forces, with whom the Stalinists were only too glad to make an alliance. But after the Liberation they found themselves, without much surprise, the refuge of all those who found they could not hope to revive immediately the extreme-Right reactionary parties of the past.

And as the main issue of struggle becomes more and more that of pro- or anti-Stalinism, the opportunism of these parties has begun to exceed all bounds. The best example of this opportunism is the French MRP, whose sole political goal is to stay in power and keep the Stalinists out. Hence they show a kaleidoscopic variety of ideological conceptions: starting as "dirigistes" (proponents of a controlled economy), they shift with the prevailing winds to be "antis," then zigzag back to being moderately "pro"; and their propagandists are kept busy thinking up elaborate formulas to cover up successive contradictions in their policy.

Thus so-called Christian Democracy has become a typical expression of the completely opportunistic and "realist" trend of the European middle class, which, having "freed" itself from its former ideals, wants only to be on the winning side now, with all the immediate advantages that would bring. Its lack of principles, giving it almost unlimited adaptability, should make one cautious about predicting Christian Democracy's disappearance in the immediate future, despite the historic trend toward political polarization. It may stay around—seriously weakened now and then but always making surprising come-backs—for quite a while yet.

"Solutions": II—Social Democracy

EUROPEAN Social Democracy today is the complement of Christian Democracy, a middle-class "Left" balancing a middle-class "Right"—and both competing for the "Center." When one notes that both groups find themselves nearly everywhere in alliance, including in government coalitions, their similarity becomes striking. And when one further notes that even for their differences they have had to go back to such supposedly settled questions as secular versus religious education, which is at present so exercising the "Third Force" cabinet in France as to threaten a rupture of the coalition, the "principled differences" between them seem, in 1948, an anachronistic vestige.*

Social Democracy (including the Sarragat group in Italy) is the main heir of the Western European liberal-radical tradition. It is also the heir of that ineffable race of professional politicians among whose most recent exploits must be counted the French wine scandals, etc., etc. The Social Democrats now provide that same French village mayor who used before the war to be a Radical-Socialist. In Italy, Germany, and the Low Countries they have reassembled the traditional humanitarian forces whose vessels are lawyers, journalists, teachers, doctors and so forth. Except for the conservative elements, most government functionaries today are more or less involved with Social Democratic politics.

It is hardly necessary to say that the Social Democracy has no longer very much to do with socialism. On the one hand, it is a channel for liberal trends in the middle class. On the other, it shows that the middle class can no longer find its specific political expression in parties of its own, but must seek it in organizations whose traditions and formal loyalties, if not practice, belong to another class.

Within Social Democracy the polarization of the middle class, far from ending, becomes acute: indeed, it is today the new

* Shortly after this article was received the French Cabinet resigned. A new coalition cabinet has been formed.—Ed.

arena to which the middle class's ideological conflicts have been principally transferred. There are to be found pro-Stalinist forces, such as Nenni in Italy, *La Bataille Socialiste* in France, Fierlinger in Czechoslovakia, and the East European Socialists who seem to want to amalgamate with the CP. Also the "orthodox" Marxists such as the German, French, and Austrian Left, the Left in Saragat's party, and the Basso wing of the Nenni Socialists; the reformists, supported particularly by trade-union leaders: thus the British Labor party, the Scandinavians, the French, Belgian, and German Center, the Austrian right wing, and the Czech Center around Lausman; neo-socialist humanitarian elements, seeking an alliance with the Christian Democratic Left, and reinforced by such remnants of the Socialist Resistance movement as Silone in Italy, the *Rassemblement Démocratique Révolutionnaire* in France; also the anti-Stalinist Labor Left in Britain and the German youth; and, finally, arch-opportunists of the right wing such as Ramadier and van Acker, who, especially in France, Belgium, Holland, and Scandinavia, look as if they had lost their way and fallen into the Social Democracy by some accident while looking for a good old cozy but alas no longer existent liberal set-up.

Social Democracy is, in a word, a pretty basketful of crabs; and that its cohesion and permanence are problematical is obvious even to its partisans.

Whither? Probably Nowhere

PRESENT-DAY Europe is characterized above all by a fundamental opposition between the working class, more or less dominated for the moment by Stalinism, and the powerful reactionary forces that are everywhere coming out of their storm cellars, more boldly throwing off the protective coloration of Resistance anti-fascism, and openly regrouping themselves. In between stands the bulk of the middle class, politically an uneasy bloc—and significantly called, with reference to the two real forces, the "Third Force"—composed principally of Christian Democratic and Social Democratic tendencies. The mere pres-

ence of three "forces," and not two, would indicate that we have here a purely transitional phenomenon, a temporary stage in the implacable polarization in European politics.

If this "Third Force" of Catholics and Social Democrats that today governs most of the countries of the West has managed so far to maintain an unstable equilibrium, it is largely because American help has been able so far to prevent a major economic catastrophe. But such recent events as the Stalinist coup in Prague, the recurrent semi-crises in the French cabinet, and the revelation of growing economic difficulties all over Western Europe seem to presage an inevitable next stage: the final political split-up of the European middle class.

It would be extremely convenient if middle-class political behavior were unemotionally dictated by the middle class's true and special interests—then one could safely predict the immediate future evolution of Christian Democracy and Social Democracy, to which in its vast majority the middle class has in the recent past brought its floating support: it would move in the direction of an authentic socialism. Unfortunately, however, the most outstanding characteristic of the middle class is that at this moment it cannot see where to go, where to escape from the storm stirred up by the main struggle between capitalism and socialism. Christian Democracy and Social Democracy are momentary refuges, but cannot pretend to any long-term historical viability. The middle class is already looking for new masters, and a figure like de Gaulle, who so far exists only in France, suits it to perfection.

But in any variant, the middle class will bring to its next "crusade" all the moral habits it picked up during its experience with fascism and Stalinism. In Italy and Germany especially, it will be increasingly nationalistic, but certainly not beyond the point where its nationalism would become incompatible with American support and aid. Fascism as such has had its day and is too discredited. But new and more hypocritical forms of totalitarianism will certainly appear, grow like rank weeds, and offer a constant

temptation to that desperate self-abandon which has in this decade replaced eclectic anti-"joiner"-ism as the principal intellectual trait of the European middle class. And of casuistical apologists, rationalizing in the most elegant prose and with the highest moral principles whatever expedients the middle class thinks will save it the longest from a fundamental social decision—of these there will certainly be no lack. That has always been the *specialité de la maison bourgeoise*.

AMONG the intellectuals, the coming divisions are already foreshadowed. The very few whose long flirtation with Marxism has had something genuine in it will throw their lot in definitely with genuine working-class parties, as their elders did in the 1917-23 period. The rest, the vast majority, will align themselves with one or the other of two main attitudes toward sharpening political developments. On the one hand there will be the "real realists," who, like Koestler, will throw overboard all "anti-anti-ism," and become just plain "anti"—viz: will support any consistent anti-Stalinist force as a lesser evil; on the other, there will be those hopeless utopians who, finding even the "Third Force" itself too "compromised" with one of the hostile camps, will take the road along which the French Rassemblement Démocratique Révo-

lutionnaire (followed by Silone in Italy?) seems to be well advanced, of completely retreating from politics. Into what? With such people one hardly knows. Existentialism, perhaps?

No, this is the end of the European middle class, not only as an independent force in politics, but even as a banner-bearer of humanitarian progressive ideals. The thought is repugnant to everyone who senses that it was essentially the middle class that produced over the last century and a half practically every important European cultural manifestation.

But this epoch is political. Caught hopelessly in the present pragmatic choice between Stalinism and anti-Stalinism, too "realistic" to flesh the thin bones of the genuinely revolutionary-socialist movement, the most honest and radical of the middle-class intellectuals can find no other solution than to quit the political field entirely.

In Eastern Europe this renunciation means concentrating at least on the lagging modernization of scientific and technological production. In the West, it means just plain disgust. The pathetic Sartre, all whose brilliance, not unlike Eliot's before him, is devoted to demonstrating that nothing means much of anything, is perhaps today the doomed and questioning European middle class's most representative symbol.

A PRACTICAL SCHEME TO SETTLE THE DP's

With Malice to None, with Profit to All

PINCHAS GOLDFEDER

Readers will have to decide for themselves whether this arresting proposal comes from the imprisoned emotion of one of the world's displaced or from the bad conscience of an American.

I WAS born in Riga in the year 1907 of respectable parents, and my father, a small merchant ambitious for his children, early directed me towards study that I might make some name for myself in one of the professions. As it fell out, I rose no higher than the post of school-teacher, never mingled in politics, and by discretion and uncommon luck survived the vicissitudes of the war years 1939-41, during which so many men more prominent disappeared. In the year 1942, after some months of vain hope that I might keep myself unnoticed, I was seized and taken off to the mines near Essen where I lived and labored until the "liberation," when I was put into the camp.

It was after three years of misery, hopelessness, and despair in this latter place, where I still remain, that there first came to me—not suddenly but following interminable nights of brooding and anguish—an arresting idea. This idea impressed itself so deeply into my mind that I am never wholly free of it. I propose to relate it in detail here, in the hope of mitigating in some measure the troubles of mankind, whom I have observed to be in a state of very considerable suffering.

I RESORT to this introduction solely that I be not misunderstood. The aspersion has been cast about that I am not altogether a person of sane mind. I cannot appeal to the friends of my early life for witness, they being either dead or trans-

ported, but I can insist as a man of truth that my life has never shown aberration. My father, I am convinced, would even now remark as he used to: that, if anything, I suffer from an extreme deficiency of imagination, and an excessive timidity. As for the notion, which I have heard whispered about, that I intend to make personal profit from my scheme, I take it upon myself to deny the accusation entirely.

It is true I intend to offer myself for sale to the Americans; but I do not plan to offer myself for sale at any higher a price than anyone else. And I undertake to labor honestly, faithfully, and loyally at the meanest work for the rest of my days. In return I ask only one thing, that I be allowed to move from a place where I no longer have any wish to remain.

But here I would not anticipate, but would rather indicate the steps whereby I was led to my discovery. For some time, being a Jew, I entertained hopes of moving to Palestine and at one time even managed to get myself onto a waiting list of illegal immigrants. But the immigrants were, almost all of them, discovered and turned back into other camps, and before long warfare settled upon Palestine, and all my hopes came to nothing.

At this juncture, it came to me that my thoughts had been unwisely restricted. There is not one person in five at the camp who could go to Palestine, and I am sure Professor Valkunas, who is not Jewish, suffers here as much as I or Dr. Stein.

Indeed, I learned from Professor Valkunas, who is a historian of international reputation, that there are fifty people outside camps for every one inside them who

are desperate to move somewhere—one out of five Frenchmen, twenty-two percent of the Dutch, possibly fifteen million Italians, unnumbered millions of Central Europeans, still greater numbers of Asiatics, and even a million Englishmen. I am assured that there are plenty of places, underdeveloped or underpopulated, for these millions to go to: namely, Alaska, Canada, Australia, the Guianas, Brazil, Argentina, other parts of Latin America, the highlands of Africa, Madagascar, Soviet Asia, and particularly the undersettled United States.

But as things now stand there is no hope of any of us moving to any of these places, there no longer existing any right to move nor any country that welcomes men who wish to move. This state of things, I am told by an acquaintance who lived several years in America, is the consequence of the United States Immigration Act, which has been a model for the rest of the countries, all of whom passed laws against the very people who want most to migrate.

Upon receiving this information, I undertook to discover how such an act could exist in a country always, as I had heard, devoted to the idea of freedom. I must report that I found no sensible reasons whatsoever. On the contrary, I found every sensible reason why there should be no such act. It appears that industrial systems require ever-increasing numbers of people, and that without growth any economy, whether capitalist, socialist, or statist, falters and fails. It appears that immigration is the way by which a correct balance is struck between numbers of men, amounts of land, and quantities of machines, all of which are scattered unevenly over the world. It appears further that immigration has always adjusted itself to good times and bad times and has even served to decrease unemployment in times of depression. It appears also that immigrants are very little given to crime and very much given to education. It even appears that they are excellent propagandists for the country to which they move.

This latter fact appearing to me difficult of belief, I applied to Professor Valkunas, who said that America was more widely and exactly known in Europe in the 19th century through the letters of immigrants than it is now known through the efforts of news agencies. He assured me that a campaign had been carried on among Americans of Italian ancestry to write anyone they could remember about their country's interest in world-wide freedom—a difficult undertaking, I should think, inasmuch as very few Italians have got into the United States in the last thirty years.

BUT this is to digress from my main point: there are no sensible arguments why an immigrant should not go where he wants whenever he wants. But the arguments advanced are not for that reason without weight.

Indeed, if I am to judge by what is written in America, the best business men, the best scholars, and the best citizens all go about denying that there should be such a thing as the right to move. I may not be believed, but the fact is true, that Americans think that their young country is mature and that it no longer has any chance to grow. Few of their scholars admit that any good is to be gained by further immigration into the country, and practically none of their businessmen understand that money is to be gained by settling immigrants in colonial projects abroad. There is much talk of solving the problems of a country within the boundaries of a country, and there is much use of the word "homogeneity." This last, I understand, is a polite term for prejudice; in its name sane men of learning have said that there should not have been any immigration into the United States after the year 1800.

Let no man be misled by the agitation current in the United States for some years for the admission of displaced persons, in which almost every important

religious, labor, and civic body in that country has joined. Few if any voices have been heard speaking for the principle and the utility of free immigration. No one has ever proposed admitting more than four hundred thousand people, which is less than one in a hundred of the people all over the world who want to move. Furthermore, not one of these groups has so much as whispered that the Immigration Act itself needs review, so that it would seem that their agitation is a sop to their consciences and not a serious effort to aid immigrants, or to wipe out barriers based solely on race hatred and national animosities. There are, to be sure, some hospitable and well-meaning Americans. But by and large the citizens of that country have become—if one is to judge by the content of their books, newspapers, and magazines—a very cautious and exclusive people, so determined to keep comfort and wealth to themselves that they utterly overlook the possibility of adding to their prosperity by sharing it with foreigners.

Upon reaching this conclusion, as the reader may well understand, I felt a very great lack of heart and even thought to throw over my researches. For it was clear that the key to the problem of immigration was the United States, and that the chief fact about that country was its prejudice against immigrants, a term, I discover to my sorrow, that is sometimes confused with the word *Jews*. Deeply perplexed, I sought out Dr. Stein, who, having studied much of psychology, was able to assure me that prejudice was more easily dealt with by unreason than reason, and that if I wished in truth to aid my fellow sufferers I had better find some device of stronger appeal to prejudice than the prejudices themselves.

I therefore undertook, with the aid of Professor Valkunas, a study of the past to see whether history might not suggest some suitable instrument for the relief of our present distress. And indeed, going back to an earlier century, I did discover a meth-

od of immigration as much better than any proposed today as life is better than death, a method, moreover, potentially so attractive to the conservative, self-seeking mentality of present-day Americans, that I decided to urge its adoption.

I do not refer, of course, to the practices of the 19th century, when, if we may believe writers of those times, immigration was genuinely free. It was clearly apparent that such wild practices would involve too great a change. They would mean giving men of the present century a degree of freedom which they could scarcely comprehend; they would wreck the entire system of states, upset the propagandists, confuse the politicians, confound the bigots; and—so far as immigrants are concerned—might be as perilous to them as feeding starving men on high foods.

The device I here propose for the alleviation of our sufferings is nothing so millennial as freedom but something at once practical and beneficial that I found in a still earlier century: I mean slavery.

EVEN at that the proposal may seem at first blush too idealistic and utopian. So low has the value of human beings sunk, that most Americans will find it hard to conceive of anyone paying money out of his own pocket to bring immigrants into his country. But history shows that such a condition actually flourished, particularly in the United States, only two hundred years ago. Indeed there was a brisk and active traffic in white indentured servants and Negro slaves, who, once they arrived in their new land, were cared for with as much attention as the best machinery is cared for today.

Critics of the carping sort will undoubtedly suggest that so careful a concern for human flesh and blood betokens a state of things too halcyon for a modern man to endure, and that the practices of the 18th century are only a whit less out of tune with our own than those of the 19th. But I humbly submit from my own study that this is not the case. Slavery is not

in all respects comfortable to slaves; on the contrary, it represents no great break with the moral principles now prevalent in many countries. And yet, miserable as is bondage, it is still immeasurably superior to the lot of the displaced and oppressed today.

But the chief merit of the proposal is that, once it is understood, it is bound to appeal instantly to the American mentality. And this is essential, since Americans, today in possession of most of the wealth of the world, are the only people alive with resources enough to buy slaves and maintain them in some decency.

For, while Americans may be greatly prejudiced against immigrants, they are greatly prejudiced in favor of whatever brings increased comfort and possessions. And since it is these material advantages, I submit, that would accrue from the keeping of slaves, it is reasonable to suppose that Americans might in this way be brought to shower upon immigrants such solicitude and care as it has not occurred to them to give them in the past fifty years. Furthermore, there is clear gain in substituting the term *slave*, which lacks emotional connotations, for the term *immigrant*, which in the United States has long been provocative of temper and heat.

There are, by Professor Valkunas' computation, some sixty million persons who urgently need to move from their present hopeless state as displaced persons or surplus population in countries too poor to afford them a home. From this number I subtract ten million sick, dying, and those otherwise unable to take advantage of the opportunity offered. Of the remaining fifty million, I estimate that at least fifteen million could be comfortably enslaved in the United States. For I understand that there are at least five million jobs that are thought dirty, inferior, or otherwise objectionable, as for instance, mining, janitoring, street-cleaning, stone masonry, gardening, plastering, and even barbering, all of which occupations are now said to be short of men. European

slaves will be as happy to assume such jobs as Americans now in them will be happy to leave them for commission-selling, hair-waving, ushering, and radio repairing.

Indeed, I believe my estimate of five million to be low, inasmuch as I include in it much-needed slave labor for American farms—but I choose to err on the side of conservatism. Similarly low is my next figure: five million domestic slaves for American households. And, in view of the demand for workers created by the production needs of the European Recovery Plan, I do not believe that a figure of five million industrial slaves is in any sense too high.

As for the remaining thirty-five million, profit can be had by occupying them as workers and agriculturalists in colonies in various favored but underdeveloped spots of the world. Capitalists in America will be the more ready to make use of immigrants abroad once they learn in their own country how profitable the owning of slaves can be. I confess I anticipate the greatest success in colonial projects, for it will be possible to employ Asiatics in the fields and Europeans in the mines and industries in numbers which racial prejudice makes impossible in the United States, no matter how attractive the profit. I can envisage a time when slaves are happily working minerals in New Guinea, when other slaves are reaping crops in the fertile lowlands of Brazil, and when a great slave civilization will flourish in the now uninhabited areas of Canada and in the uplands of Africa. As for obstacles interposed by immigration laws, I see none of them. Slaves are productive items, like machinery, not persons, and their admission will require no change in any existing regulation.

I AM aware that I shall be told that the price of even so hopeful an enterprise would be too high, that at present steamship rates two billion dollars would be involved simply for the transportation of fifty million people, a sum that no nation

would consider spending save for some purpose of war or diplomacy. Let me point out in answer: first, that no immigrant mindful of his present condition would name a purchase price higher than the cost of his transportation; second, that steamship lines would undoubtedly come forward with discounts for mass shipments; and third, that the purchasers of the slaves would not be the American government but individual Americans. In few cases would the cost per slave exceed two hundred dollars f.o.b. New York or San Francisco. The prospective market would include millions of farmers, contractors, housewives, mine operators, corporations, and capitalists, the last named of whom have long had more funds than they know how to invest.

It may be argued that even wealthy people are unlikely to go to the expense of two hundred dollars simply for the sake of one human soul, but I submit that Americans of the most average means nowadays spend roughly as great a sum for a small refrigerator, a cheap fur coat, a two weeks summer outing, or an engine overhaul for their automobile. Furthermore, my proposal is directed not at men of charity but at men of business. Gain is to be had in setting up wholesale slave agencies and installment finance companies, and the anticipated income from advertising ought to enlist the efforts of agencies of the highest standing. Finally, slaves could be carried as assets in company books, which, I regret to say, are now so inhumanly kept as to give no indication of the value of laboring human beings. I ask the reader to speculate as to the happy possibilities for manipulation of financial statements by writing up or writing down slave assets.

Dr. Stein has made a criticism of my proposal, pointing out that the apparent advantages are all on the side of the immigrants, for slavery will give them precisely what they now lack most: namely, a chance to move, useful work, and a sense of being of some value, not to mention decent habitation and some food and clothes. Furthermore, the care with which Americans look

after their automobiles and their front lawns suggests that there may even arise a certain competitive display in the matter of slave care, a family or a corporation taking actual pride in the health and appearance of its chattels.

That my scheme offers high encouragement to immigrants and particularly to those in a position similar to that of Dr. Stein and myself, I will in no wise deny. The three millions of us who are desperately displaced persons or refugees are all of us without exception cooped up in camps, abandoned, forgotten, unwanted, and forbidden either to work or even to hope to get work. Some of us once were farmers, many of us men of trade, and not a few practicers of professions, but now we do not exist as anything at all. We belong nowhere, not to the place where we were born, not to the place where we lived, not even to the wretched barracks where we now exist. We are not even persons in the legal sense, and there is but one known way for any of us to become such, namely, to commit some crime under circumstances that will make possible our admission to prison. But even this boon is denied us. The police are uncooperative. We are too many, and the opportunities for obvious crime too few. There is thus no hope for us at all, for no one will admit that we need to eat, work, and exist as recognized living beings. To live in some actual place, to be wanted for some real work—these advantages that slavery would grant us are almost unimaginably in excess of anything any of us have for many years allowed ourselves to hope for.

BUT were it true that the advantages were all on the side of the immigrants, I would abandon my scheme as being utterly out of step either with practicality or prevailing morals. But there are signal, even though less obvious, advantages to American purchasers. The chief of these advantages—the future growth of the country—will not bear discussion, since Americans are convinced beyond argument that there is no growth to be had. But it is entirely possible

to discuss openly and in specific detail the comfort that would accrue from a cheap and inexhaustible source of willing labor. It is possible to say, without the slightest fear of contradiction, that farmers could see more movies, housewives attend more clubs, and corporations give more time off to their employes for watching sports. Furthermore, the expenditure of some two billions at this time could help get rid of some of the loose money which is of great worry to some Americans in these inflationary days, and, inasmuch as the expenditure would serve as a business deduction on the income tax, it would satisfy other Americans who think there is not loose money enough.

Let no man, therefore, talk to me of better solutions, as for instance that the United States should revise its immigration laws, on grounds of fairness, justice, or humanity, or out of respect for the ancient principles of freedom, equality, or brotherhood, or that business men should establish colonies of free immigrants throughout the world. I have studied all such alternatives and know them to be impractical. And while it is true that the world has as much chance for growth as it had two hundred years ago, it is evident that the world thinks it has not, and psychological predilections, I have learned, are not to be overcome by simple discussion. Let no one imagine that the Immigration Act of the United States can be altered one jot or one tittle in this 20th century; the miserable fate of even the token legislation proposed for the relief of displaced persons in the American Congress

amply proves that. It is obvious that the racial quota system is a rock to the mental balance of the American people, who, were they to lose that which embodies their prejudices, might only too well lose love of themselves. And since love of self in these days is greater a hundred times over than any contrary affection for others, it is apparently as visionary to conceive of any change in the American mind as it is to believe in the sudden practice at some future time of the principles of religion. Yet I venture to suggest, for the reassurance of the pious, that in slavery religion can in some degree be made manifest, and in a form in no wise offensive or subversive to any man's worldly interests. This was so in an earlier America; it can be done again.

IN PRESENTING my proposal for public consideration, I have but one request: that it not be referred to control boards, committees, commissions, planning boards, or international agencies, as all suggestions on immigration have been referred in the past. If this is done, nothing will come of my proposal, and the world will lose the benefit of an institution that is at once admirably close to the callous and inhumane ways of this world as we know it today—and yet immeasurably better. Let us put our trust in self-interest and free business enterprise!

In our times—our times being what they are—slavery represents progress. Let no man throw away this one surviving chance to rescue mankind from a world fallen into bigotry and autarchy.

Faced with an injustice so monumental as to make ordinary argument seem useless, Jonathan Swift in 1729 published his *Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People from Being a Burden to their Parents or the Country, by Fattening and Eating Them*. HERRYMON MAURER, feeling himself confronted, in the plight of Europe's DP's, by the same kind of inhumanity, has in the above article turned again to the classical weapon of political satire. Mr. Maurer might be best described as a "fighting Quaker"; certainly he has been that in his uncompromising advocacy of the right and value of free immigration—notably in his extraordinary article "The Right to Move" in *Fortune* magazine. His book on Gandhi, *Great Soul*, will be published this fall by Doubleday. Mr. Maurer was born in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, in 1914.

AMERICAN JUDAISM: ZOA BLUEPRINT

Are We to be Israel's Colony Culturally?

ISRAEL KNOX

THE recent convention of the Zionist Organization of America, coming less than two months after the birth of the Republic of Israel, felt itself obliged to consider seriously the relations between American Jews and the new state. Emanuel Neumann, president of the Zionist Organization, repeatedly gave assurance that American Jews would not interfere in Israel's sovereignty, not only because it is solely Israel's prerogative, but also because Jews as American citizens cannot have dual allegiances. Yet on the other hand, Dr. Neumann went on to say that the position of Jews, outside Israel, was still anomalous ("The basic anomaly of the Jews has been

Now that the primary aim of American Zionism—the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine—has been achieved, it is generally recognized that we enter a new period in the relationship between the Jews of America and the Jews of Israel. It was logical, therefore, that for many delegates at the convention of the Zionist Organization of America in Pittsburgh in July, a leading item on the agenda was the question of the content and direction of future Zionist activity in the United States, especially in its cultural and educational phases. ISRAEL KNOX here contributes a discussion article giving his view of the Convention's deliberations on this problem. Dr. Knox, assistant professor of philosophy at Ohio University, is a scholar with wide experience in the field of Jewish culture and Jewish life. His article "Is America Exile or Home?" in the November, 1946 COMMENTARY aroused national comment. Dr. Knox was born in Russia, came to this country as a child, and studied at the City College of New York and Columbia University, where he received his doctorate in 1936. He has been editor of the *Workmen's Circle Call* and lecturer at the Yiddish Scientific Institute. Dr. Knox has contributed to *Jewish Social Studies*, *Menorah Journal*, *Tsukunft*, and other periodicals. He is the author of a book: *The Aesthetic Theories of Kant, Hegel, and Schopenhauer*.

ended, but not completely—ninety-three per cent are still in the Diaspora"); and he, and others, did not hesitate to refer to the rest of the world, specifically including the United States, as *Galut*, the Exile, Diaspora. In this, he was echoing the traditional Zionist viewpoint, which regards countries other than Palestine as inevitably and permanently second-class countries for Jews, and Jews fated forever to be second-class citizens and alienated residents therein.

Dr. Neumann is not one to use words with rhetorical abandon. But other delegates, in less guarded moments, expressed the full and consistent logic of such a view. The director of the Jewish National Fund had said, "Zionism came to give us status and dignity"; a young rabbi from the Far West asserted at a session of the Committee on Education, without meeting challenge or protest, something like the following: "I was born in Palestine; the Jews of Palestine have status and dignity; the Jews of the *Galut* have no status and no dignity." And at a banquet in honor of Dr. Silver, a prominent Zionist, whose remarks were praised lavishly by Dr. Neumann, explained—once again without meeting protest and challenge—that "because of the long exile, our parents and grandparents perhaps degenerated into a state of mental and spiritual impotence," and therefore were incapable (unlike Dr. Silver) of transforming the Messianic dream of national redemption into actual deed.

The *Galut* as a stigma has sunk so deep into the consciousness of Zionists that even such a man as Dr. Margoshes, who has often declared his belief in the viability of American Jewry, in his daily English column in a Yiddish newspaper, was prompted to repudiate himself exactly one

week before the opening of the Convention, writing: ". . . What is there in American Jewish life of today to fire one's imagination? . . . Time was when the immigrant, arriving at these shores with not a cent in his pocket but a boatload of dreams of the American promise, made excellent copy for sentimental novelists. . . . But those heroic pioneering days are over, and the universal grayness which is the predominant color of the American Jewish scene is very little, indeed, to attract attention. . . . If there is anything in American Jewish reality to strike the fancy of the American Jewish youth, it must have missed it" (Day, June 25).

A brief digression may help us to understand. It was Bergson who said that we laugh at men and women, and not at things, because, presumably, our sense of glory can be inflated only at the expense of our own kind. Dr. Margoshes demotes American Jewry to an inferior status in order to elevate, by sharp contrast, Palestinian Jewry: "Thus far Israel has been the first great burst of light on the dark ocean of our Jewish existence. A Jewish army heroically resisting the onslaught of seven Arab states; a new nation being born on the shores of the Mediterranean; a new social order coming into existence between battles. . . . As far as I know there is nothing in what the five million Jews in the United States have wrought in the last fifty years to match this stirring appeal."

THIS attitude is not restricted to the Zionist sector of American Jewry, considerable as that is. It now pervades areas of American Jewry that used to be remote from Zionism.

The Yiddishist schools named after Sholem Aleichem grew out of the very idea, precisely, that the Jews were non-territorial—trans-territorial—people, and living as they did in many countries, were one and indivisible in "historic destiny," cultural heritage, and contemporary creativity. Yet in recent years the graduation ceremonies of these schools have struck another note. *Galut*,

that is, America, is depicted as a desert in so far as Jewish survival, in the "national" sense, is concerned. And the audience at the graduation this year was addressed in the following manner: (the schools are not parochial, but supplementary to the public schools): "You will be given 'sweets.' But you will be made to feel at home as the Cantonists were. It will be a little finer, subtler. Many of you have already felt it." To get the full impact of the comment, one must recall that the Cantonists were Jewish children seized from their parents in Czarist Russia during the first half of the 19th century, sent to distant places to serve in the army for twenty-five years or longer, and thus weaned away from Judaism.

The students themselves wrote in the foreword of the graduation publication: "We know that by virtue of the cultural flowering of our *Galut* life in America, together with the flowering of our *Yishuv* in Palestine, we shall strengthen the existence of our people." There is nothing wrong with this sentence if one is willing to overlook the linkage of life in America with *Galut*. From almost every quarter of official Jewish life we hear it reiterated that Jewish culture must be and can be sustained in America. But one is tempted to ask, how can it be sustained by young people who are taught to think of their lives in America as lives in *Galut*, and who are frightened or persuaded into the belief that their future here is almost as bleak as was that of the Cantonists in Czarist Russia? Obviously, only emotionally and intellectually split personalities can come of this attitude. And yet the *raison d'être*, first and last, for a specifically Jewish education is to tie together all the different strands of the child's thoughts and feelings, values and ideals, as Jew and as American, into a fairly coherent pattern and thus enable him to behold his people and the world in perspective.

What "coherent pattern" and what "plausible perspective" is to be discovered in a short story, written by a girl graduating student, whose "hero," a successful, fully

"assimilated" lawyer, wholly estranged from his fellow-Jews, reads of the brave doings in Palestine and is moved to leave America for Eretz Yisrael?

The concluding paragraph of the story reads: "When Jason M. Zarenoff, or, as he now called himself, *Yitzchok Zarenofsky* (he returned to his old name), left for Eretz Yisrael, his name was mentioned in a short article in an English-language newspaper. When his former secretary read it, she sighed and said, 'Yes, he was a good man, but he was not all there.' But Yitzchok, now in Eretz Yisrael, felt that all was well with him, among his own Jews (*menshn-Yidn*)."

The "aesthetic" truth of the tale, of the sudden change in Zarenoff, need not concern us, nor need we linger over the fact that Zarenofsky with its Slavic suffix is just as "non-Jewish" as Zarenoff. The disturbing question is this: if the young writer means what she says, then what can her notion of American Jews be? Obviously, she means that it is impossible for a conscious Jew to fulfill himself while living in America. And if she does not mean what she says—if it is only a passing fancy or the result of "indoctrination"—then what significance does such a fantasy education have, and how will it enhance this girl's self-respect and bring her closer to her people?

ONE can imagine what goes on in the avowedly "nationalist" schools, under the direct tutelage and control of Zionists. Speaking to the youngsters who attend such schools, one gets the impression that for them Palestine coincides with the whole of Jewry, and that American Jews were especially placed on this continent by historic destiny to provide financial means for the upbuilding of Eretz Yisrael. The Hebrew textbooks used in the New York high schools and colleges give the impression that Jewish life and culture are confined exclusively to modern Palestine. Even more important, they are completely devoid of any sense of those values which Jews and the world (in spite of itself) have regarded as con-

stituting the Jewish heritage, as a spiritual legacy that has been "a light unto the nations." This millennial religious and cultural continuity is cast aside as of no worth compared to the "pomp and glory" of state and flag. As it happens, the Hebrew textbook published by the Zionist Organization has been severely criticized, on these very grounds, by a Zionist, in a Zionist journal: "After getting through with its forty lessons, the student may confidently enter a restaurant in Tel Aviv and get through ordering with flying conversational Hebrew colors. . . . I entertain no illusions and don't expect the ZOA to take my unsolicited advice. But here it is, anyhow: 'Stop selling *Hebrew Self-Taught* to Jews, for what it can teach Jews is worse than nothing.'" (*Jewish Spectator*, July 1947.)

In his recent book, *The Future of the American Jew*, Dr. Mordecai Kaplan, himself a Zionist, writes: "The attitude of the *sholele hatefuzah* (negators of the Diaspora) is not likely to inspire our neighbors with confidence in the Jew, or with respect for Judaism" (page 129). Dr. Kaplan knows that Zionism, whether central or marginal in a philosophy of Judaism, is not, and cannot be equated with, the whole of Jewish life and experience: "Jewish peoplehood was never identified exclusively with state or territory, although it availed itself of the state of Eretz Yisrael as an agency of its civilization. Essentially identification with Jewish peoplehood meant participation in Jewish civilization, in the Jewish way of life, in Torah" (page 537).

Dr. Kaplan was not present at the convention in Pittsburgh and did not address the delegates at the banquet, but the Zionist who attributed "mental and spiritual impotence" to our ancestors was. Nor indeed were any notable scholars, thinkers, or "intellectuals" present at this convention, one of whose announced major objectives was to turn its face, now that Israel had been won, toward Jewish America, toward Jewish education and culture in America. The fact is that not a single paper was read on this basic issue or on any other aspect

of Jewish culture. (Zionists, however, are not the only ones at fault in this, since anti-intellectualism and a general negation of the values of the mind prevail in almost all Jewish organizations—from the Left to the Right, from labor to the Zionists.)

THE delegates themselves did not behave as if they were in *Galut*, and seemed to feel very much at home in the hotels, in the restaurants, in the streets. And the mayor of the city in which they were holding the convention saluted them as fellow-Zionists.

Discussing this with the delegates, I heard what I had already heard from Jews as I travelled in various parts of the country, that America is *Galut* for two reasons. First, they point to the presence of anti-Semitism, adding, as they remember Auschwitz, Treblinka, and Maidanek, "It can happen here too"; and then the more "nationalistic" ones brood over the hardships of bringing up their children as "full," "integral" Jews.

It would be folly to deny or to explain away the existence of anti-Semitism in America, and it would be more than "bad taste"—nay, an unforgivable sin—to make light of the tragedy that befell the Jews of Europe. Yet these answers are too glib and as often as not "stereotypes," based upon merely incidental experience, and generalized without much thought.

An acquaintance of mine, a doctor leaving, at considerable cost to himself, for a six-months' service in Palestine in some scientific capacity, told me the other day: "Well, this much is certain, if a policeman in Tel Aviv hands me a ticket for speeding, it might be because of corruption in the municipal administration or what not, but it won't be because of anti-Semitism." Assuming that this was said half-humorously (though that did not appear to be its intent), this remark still has a moral. This man could only justify himself and his departure on a humanitarian mission by *negation*, by stamping America as *Galut*.

A delegate at the convention, a sensitive

and intelligent individual, told me that when he attended one of the metropolitan colleges, others thought he was German, but on learning that he was Jewish they broke relations with him. Whatever the case may have been—and there was no conscious dishonesty in the remark—it did not occur to him that there might have been an element of "rationalization" in it, or exaggeration, or a misreading of facts, or sheer imagination. Little wonder then that he, and others like him, were attuned to the notion that America was *Galut*.

"Normalization," as envisaged by Pinsker and Herzl, required anti-Semitism as a lever, and it could be attained only in a Jewish state. The rest of the planet would remain a kind of limbo, a Diaspora. The experience of the European nightmare has in the minds of many "nationalists" extended this theme, so basic to Zionist thinking, to the implication that if any Gentile is scratched he will turn out to be an anti-Semite. And here too the "dialectic of extremes" meets: for all their wholesale suspicion and rejection of the *goy*, the delegates rose to their feet again and again when "good Gentiles" addressed them; and the people who introduced these speakers praised them to the skies.

Only the blind would dance in the streets, singing, "Hallelujah, there are no traces of anti-Semitism in America." There is anti-Semitism here, and it may even be conceded that the Jew is a special target of the prejudiced, that he is their natural and inevitable scapegoat. But he is not the only one and his plight is not the most unbearable one—surely not in comparison with the Negro's. And little can be done about anti-Semitism if one adopts the simple premise that it is better to get a ticket for speeding in Tel Aviv than in New York. Are all five million Jews in America to go to Tel Aviv? Where is the Negro to go? (And, for that matter, what is the Italian or Polish pre-medical student to do—even though Italy and Poland are "sovereign" states—about the very vital obstacles to *his* admission to the medical

schools, even granting they are not quite so great as those faced by the Jewish student?) And what are non-national and non-racial minorities to do? Where are such dissidents as Jehovah's Witnesses to go? Where, in the past, could the Quakers escape to?

But the constant harping upon anti-Semitism is not as dangerous (though it is that too) as the stubborn refusal to understand its nature and see it as one of the shadows in the American picture. Rather than seeking mental flight overseas, surely we might better work together with all the genuine, "non-totalitarian" forces of liberalism and progress, Jews and Gentiles, to perfect American democracy. Admittedly, there is more to anti-Semitism than a social and economic analysis would disclose, and the religious and psychological versions of it must not be ignored, but certainly the fight for integral democracy does provide a reasonable and hopeful program of action.

THE second argument—as to the difficulties of bringing children up as "full" Jews—is by far the more insistent and "authentic" one. It comes, with some, from the heart, as is shown by their readiness to go to much expense to send their children to parochial schools and Jewish summer camps. Still, they are troubled because, despite all efforts, the results are not always what they want them to be. And they account for this by the discontinuity between the "cultural climate" at home and in the Jewish school, on one side, and the larger environment of which these are a part, on the other.

Now if by "integral" Jewishness full secular nationalism is meant, the Zionists are correct in asserting that it cannot be fully attained outside a state. The content of *secular* nationalism coincides at too many points with the content of the larger environment and entails a conflict of loyalties or else the subordination of one loyalty to the other. Assuredly Jewish children in America, even if they should know Hebrew or Yiddish (which is desirable on several counts), will know it as a secondary lan-

guage, not their primary one; and of course no one (whether Zionist or not) will expect them to divide their allegiance as citizens between the United States and any other country.

At the same time, there is room for cultural democracy in America, or, as it is perhaps inaccurately described, for cultural pluralism. There are many "minorities" in America, and they are bound together by the English language, by law and economics, and (at least constitutionally) by rights and duties. Cultural democracy would not only tolerate diversity and difference within this frame but would encourage them. Such diversity and difference could have endurance and value if they do not duplicate what is accessible to Americans as a whole, but rather foster and preserve what is distinctive about the various groups in language, custom, tradition.

Accordingly, if "integral" Jewishness is subsumed under the aspects of ethics, religion, and intellectual values, it can be achieved with some success in America. But if the content of Jewishness is regarded as being exclusively the fact of national identity and the exhibition of this fact, then America is indeed no place for the "full" Jew. If the conclusions of Herzlian Zionism, or of any type of secular nationalism, continue to be accepted as the core of one's Jewish *Weltanschauung*, and if the Jew who adopts them is consistent, he must hold that *Am Yisrael* (the people of Israel) can perpetuate itself only in *Eretz Yisrael*, in a state of its own, and all else is *Galut*.

FOR those who reject these, there is, however, another alternative—not a compromise between the preceding two, or even a "synthesis." This alternative holds that not much can be done with the "Jewish problem" unless we are willing to affirm at once the *peoplehood* of Israel and its religion, and to repeat, with our sages, *seriously but not literally*, that "Israel and its religion (Torah and God) are inseparable." The concept of peoplehood takes cognizance of our presence all over the

world and of our cultural legacy—languages, folkways, art, history, our secular contributions to civilization—and saves us from the error of the sterile creedal stress of the Council of Judaism and the kind of Reform that it represents. The emphasis upon religion, in the broader, fuller sense, that is, upon the ethico-religious basis and character of our culture, and the recognition that there is, in the Jewish tradition and past experience, only a slight, if any, separation between domains of faith and morals, can keep us from yielding to a nationalism that is primarily egocentric and territorial and predicated upon the state.

Fortunately this ethico-religious alternative fits with the American scene. Religious freedom has been realized here, and the separation of church and state, as guaranteed in the First Amendment, has made of America a land where religion is not a function of power but an expression of conscience. The prophetic heritage which is ours has played its part in America's inception and has been a dimension of its civilization. As we teach this tradition to our children and pass it on to them, it is ascertainable as distinctively ours because it is linked up with our career and "destiny" as a people, because it is born of our suffering and hope, and because of the peculiar ethical interpretation that we give it. And yet it does not stand as antipodal to the heritage and civilization of the land we live in. And while the prophetic heritage is the foundation and the summit of our culture as a people, it is not all. What is commonly designated as "secular" culture could be easily included in our educational curricula and in our communal enterprises, and would expand in meaning as related to this heritage.

Much has been said of the "alienation" of the modern Jew, and his lot has been compared to that of the intellectual, the artist, and the non-conformist. In a measure this is true. But the Jew, like the artist and non-conformist, is also at home in the world, or else, like the Babylonian and the Assyrian, he would have vanished long ago

(even as the artist and the non-conformist would be ineffectual in a world they totally disowned). The poignant tale of the eternal and wandering Jew may have its roots in hostility, but it is also evidence that the nations have recognized the deathlessness of Israel; thus, even in alienation, the world is yet "Israel's home." And of all the lands in our long itinerary, none has been as much home as is America, and our sojourn here can be as "normal" as that of anyone else if we relinquish the delusion that normality (either for Jews or for anybody) is as smooth as velvet.

THE slogan at the moment in Zionism, as put forward by Dr. Neumann and apparently approved by the delegates, is cultural activity among the Jews of America. There was warmth and a ring of sincerity in Dr. Neumann's speech; he said: "We must be honest with ourselves and with our children. We must decide whether we really mean to perpetuate Jewish life in the Diaspora and if so, how. . . . It will not do to depend upon the automatic radiations and reverberations of the pulsating life in Israel. It will not do for the Jews of the Diaspora to live on spiritual and cultural importations. We must be producers as well as consumers. Jewish life here and elsewhere must become vital by becoming creative or it may not survive at all. The task will be much easier and immeasurably facilitated by the Hebraic renaissance in Palestine. But there must be forces actively at work here that will build an authentic and indigenous Jewish life, interacting creatively with the life of Israel."

Yet the final formula intoned by Dr. Neumann, and caught up by many of the delegates, still leaves causes for anxiety. The speech was applauded, and then in subsequent discussion Palestine again became all, while America—*Diaspora* in the speech—remained an outlying province. And Jewish culture was once more interpreted in terms of Zionism. So much so that even Dr. Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, though deploring, at the meeting of the Committee on

Education, the tendency to "disregard the creation of Jewish culture in the *Galut*," went on to say, "but Jewish culture has found its only expression through Zionism." And Dr. Margoshes entitled a column on Dr. Neumann's speech "Zionizing American Jewry" (*Day*, July 10).

Dr. Neumann's final formula says that "we shall make use of the literary, artistic, musical and religious resources of the Jewish state," and has little to say about making full use of our own resources here in the United States, about developing and enriching them and affecting, in reciprocal relationship, those of the new state. What it amounts to after all, Dr. Neumann's plea notwithstanding, is that American Zionists visualize themselves as engaging in an enormous business—export and import. We shall see the exportation—in addition to funds—of *halutzim* ("where once hundreds have gone, now thousands will go") and in return the importation of Israel's "literary, artistic, musical, and religious" products. We shall be in for a series of exhibitions, sales, tours, and "days" or "weeks" set aside for Palestinian music, art, and what not. And that, together with an expenditure of several million dollars on the "Hebraization" of American Jews, will be advertised as culture, as the "enriching and deepening" of Jewish life in America.

It was not surprising therefore, and almost amusing, to see how rapidly the session of the Committee on Education veered from the essential to the trivial. And the climax was reached when one delegate, out of an egregious lack of historical reverence, said something like this: "We are facing possibly the greatest Renaissance in the last two thousand years of our life, and so . . . must be up-to-date in utilizing the very latest techniques and the most progressive methods, such as the screen, radio, and other devices." And why not? It will keep people busy, will entertain them, will make them "culture-conscious"—and it will promote business.

ACCORDING to the manual of information handed out to delegates and the press, the membership of the Zionist Organization of America is a quarter of a million. Together with the Hadassah and the younger groups (leaving out the Labor Zionists, the Mizrachi, and the Revisionists) it probably approximates half a million. That is a sizable slice of our Jewish community. The enthusiasm and devotion of many Zionists are indisputable, and those of the older generation, with their East European background, are "Jewish" to the marrow of their bones. As I write these lines, several women of the Hadassah, within sight of my window, are soliciting funds for the purchase of medical supplies for the wounded in Israel, and I am moved, as all of us would be.

But now that the *political* aim of Zionism is clothed with flesh and sinew, and the passion for propaganda must subside (since almost all endorse partition), it is quite likely that Zionists will become eager to take over Jewish institutions—centers, temples, synagogues, Y's, fraternal orders welfare agencies, and above all, schools. They have participated actively in these, and that they are entitled to share in their administration and in the shaping of their policies is unquestionable. But hegemony—that is something else. Jewish education in the United States would then become (or continue to be) what Hebrew text-books now are, a footnote on "modern" Palestine, and a confirmation speech, the ability to say "hello," "goodbye" and a few other phrases in Hebrew, would constitute the end and consummation of Jewish education.

Neither the theory nor the practice of Zionists has prepared them for the role they may now wish to play in this country. Their convention revealed that the culture they boast of is impoverished in content and, where not purely "formal," banal and crude. For from beginning to end of its sessions not a gleam of Jewish "style" was discernible—whether in the opening invocations which were improvised by rabbis in grandiloquent phrases; or in the

noisy and ugly march of the banners at the first session; or in the cult of leadership invoked by the two tremendous portraits of Silver and Neumann on the stage; or at the banquet in honor of Dr. Silver and in the excessive eulogies attendant upon it. Here the convention became "American"; here was assimilation to the environment; and at its most vulgar. With ease it forsook hallowed Jewish customs and traditions, clearly corroborating Oscar Handlin's shrewd observation that cultural nostalgia—and escapism—is characteristic of America, that in us, as in other groups, there is the inclination to invest the "foreign" culture we originally brought with us with our highest values, but to live in the here and now of America on a lower plane, as *prostementshn*.

Now Jewish life in America requires not only a way but a "style" (*nusach*)—not as opposed to, but within the larger environment. Jewish education, and hence creativity, are doomed from the start unless we have communal experiences of our own. A history cannot be borrowed; it must be "lived," experienced. At the

moment interest in Israel, as it fights heroically, is bright and steady. But when peace returns or we grow accustomed to the happenings there, our aid to Israel, too, will falter, unless we possess "status and dignity" and "spiritual resources." The Jews of Israel and the Jews of America and the remnants in Europe are equal in "dignity and status," and, though in their different circumstances, they must "enrich and deepen" their own and each other's lives out of their various communal experiences.

There is much shouting now in the Jewish community (and little tolerance for dissidence); a "sweet unanimity" has descended upon us in the support of partition. But the "shouting and tumult" will die down and, like Elijah on the mount, we shall hear the "still, small voice," and shall settle down to the stupendous task of establishing Jewish education and culture in America, our home, on a firm foundation. Despite the convention's resolution on Jewish culture in America—perhaps because of it—the task cannot be left solely or largely to Zionists. It belongs to all American Jews.

THE VOICE OF THE BLOOD

A Story

RALPH MANHEIM

THE doorbell rang and Frau Griesgram padded out in her prewar felt slippers. In the old days, she recalled, a ring of the bell would bring the doors of four roomers ajar and she would have to race to get there first. Today no one expected anything good. She opened the peep-hole and inspected the caller. A slight well-dressed man of less than medium height, blond, with thin lips, and a faintly aquiline nose. Quite young. You never saw so young a man nowadays, except in a shapeless, forlorn Reichswehr uniform. Most callers, especially in these unreliable times, would slide into the corner to avoid that eye in the peep-hole, but this young man stood dead center and beamed. There's one who must have a clear conscience.

The young man, it is true, was quite at peace with the world, but what made him beam at this instant was the thought: strange city, this Heidelberg, you press a button, the bell actually rings, someone examines you through a peep-hole. The war had been over for two months.

Frau Griesgram opened. "Fräulein Bernauer, please," said the young man. The landlady's face fell but she quickly recomposed it. "Ah yes, Fräulein Bernauer, sad, very sad to think of such things going on. Yes she's in. That second door." And she padded back to her kitchen, rather abruptly it seemed to the young man.

He knocked and an absent voice bade him enter.

Rosa Bernauer was tinkering with an alcohol burner and did not raise her eyes.

RALPH MANHEIM was born in New York in 1907 and studied at Harvard University. In 1945 he worked with the Military Government in Germany. He is well-known as a translator, and translated Hitler's *Mein Kampf* (Houghton Mifflin, 1943) into English. He has also contributed articles and stories to various magazines.

She wore slacks and an American khaki shirt. "Yes?" she said.

He strode to the middle of the room. Now his face was truly aflame with joy. "Fräulein Bernauer," he said. "I am a half-Jew!"

She waited for him to go on, then she realized that this remark was intended to stand by itself. "Half-Jews grow on a conveyor belt," she said, but she looked up. The skin of her cheeks was taut, the look in her eyes alarmingly childlike.

Sorely disappointed at his reception, he stood for a moment in thought. Then his face lit up again. "Well, yes," he said. "There must be a lot of them. The thing that matters is here." He tapped his heart. "Here I'm a full Jew."

"Don't be silly," she said.

"It's the voice of the blood."

"There is no voice of the blood."

His eyes filled with compassion and he intoned: "What have they done to you, poor child?" She laughed now, the childlike eyes trying to carry her face along. "You're insane, young man. But maybe you can help me fix this stove."

"I'm sure I can. In the army . . ."

Anyone knew that they didn't take half-Jews in the army. That proved, if proof were needed, that he was some sort of crook, but he was so naive about it, there couldn't be anything to fear. And he was company.

"You're a pretty boy," she said. "Really like candy." She touched his striped silk tie. His fingers tinkered deftly with the burner and soon he had it working. She put the pot of water on it and sat down. "Now we can wait for it to boil," she said. "That is, I mean, I can wait for it to boil, unless . . . do you like farina?"

"Why of course. You see?"

"See what?"

"There is something that draws us Jews together. You wouldn't share your farina ration with just anybody."

Speculation on this point was distasteful

to her. She changed the subject. "I have a few raisins," she said. "And look." She opened the clothes cupboard, rummaged in a pile of rags, and triumphantly withdrew a can of evaporated milk. "An American gave it to me."

"Fiedler?"

"Yes, how did you know?"

"He sent me here. He gave me a chocolate bar."

"A chocolate bar! My mouth waters."

"Oh, I'm so ashamed. I ate it."

"That's because you're only a half-Jew."

She hadn't thought herself capable of so much lightness. Since her liberation from the concentration camp she had really spoken to no one. There were some things she would not speak of, and other things had no reality. She felt dead in a dead world; what made her go through the motions of living was only a faint recollection that once life had been enjoyable. And she was tenacious. If only she could hang on, the new surroundings would change her, and little by little she would live again. Trifling things in the course of the day fed her recollection. At noon she sat on a bench by the Neckar and once for a brief moment the sun had seemed particularly warm. She felt that it was going to warm her through and she would be young once more. But suddenly, though no cloud darkened it, the sun lost its warmth and she shivered again. Once a half-Jewish woman had come to see her. The woman had been kind, she had talked of her children, education, the shortage of vaccines and medicines, her bombed-out cousins in Mannheim; and Rosa, longing for friends, eager to be civil, had said nothing. The woman had her own tragedy. Rosa hated tragedy. She wanted to be normal, but how could anybody be normal?

Rosa worked at the Military Government. She spent the day amid a welter of forms that neither saddened nor cheered her, but did distract her through the hours. Her greatest pleasure came to her from the GI's who streamed in and out of the office on some errand or pretext. They were neither tragic nor normal, they were just children. They boomed out, "Hullo Rosie," and brandished cigarettes and candy bars. "How's about a walk in the woods?" A moment of uproarious clowning expressed them so completely that she wondered how they could

get through the rest of the day. Yet how did she, how did anyone get through the day?

Sometimes Fiedler came to see her, with a present and his inevitable questions. Fiedler was an American civilian, a heavy-set man just over military age, usually mild but prey to sudden rages. He worked in some mysterious intelligence office and was forever getting up surveys about attitudes and states of mind. She felt close to him in a cold, clinical way; it seemed to her that he was as lost and cynical as she, except that he was well-fed and enjoyed his cynicism, while her stomach had fatally shrunk and she enjoyed nothing. He was most cynical of all about his surveys, but he carried them on indefatigably. He studied the attitudes of people released from concentration camps, he especially studied what few Jews he could find. That is how he had come to send Paul Fröhlich to see Rosa.

THE water boiled, Rosa poured in farina and stirred. Her eyes looked nowhere, she thought of nothing. Paul sat on the bumpy settee and watched her against the fading light. "A woman of valor—who shall find?" he muttered. She was unacquainted with the words but sensed that they were some Jewish lore that this mountebank had gathered up. She turned back from her nothingness and smiled indulgently. What nonsense! But pleasant.

The farina was done, she stirred in milk and raisins. "Dinner is served."

"Can you say the blessing?"

"No."

"I can't say it either, but I like to hear it said."

They ate in silence. The portions were not large, but it cost her a struggle to finish hers and she looked a little green. Food was not to be wasted, though. She must stretch her stomach, and if it ever got back to normal size, then perhaps. . . . "I'm sorry there's no more," she said. "But if you come next Wednesday, I'll have my meat ration."

"It was very good," he said. "And eaten with a grateful heart." He beamed like a burgher smoking his after-dinner cigar, and she beamed faintly back.

"But now," he said, "I want to talk to you. I feel I ought to explain myself." He left her by the table and moved over to the settee where he straddled a bump. "You've been

very tactful. You didn't even ask me how a half-Jew came to be in the army. . . ."

"You don't owe me any explanations," she said.

"No, but I want to explain. I feel there is a destiny between us and I want you to know. Until the summer of last year I didn't know there was Jewish blood in my veins. But I always sensed it. In the Hitler Youth, at the Front, I always felt some barrier between me and my comrades. I didn't know what it was. But once in Russia when I saw . . . when I was forced to look on . . . when I saw . . . a certain thing . . . I can't speak of it, to you above all I can't speak of it . . . I almost knew. It was as though a revelation had been locked in my heart, trying to burst out. . . . But how could it? Then in the summer of 1944 I was home on my last furlough. I was drinking coffee with my mother, and she asked me, the way mothers always do, with worry and kindness dripping from their lips: 'Tell me, my boy, tell me the truth, how are things going out there?' I should have known better than to tell that woman the truth, but that truth is what saved my life, my spiritual life. 'Mutti,' I said. 'We are going to lose the war.' And then what happened? She smashed her coffee cup on the floor and shouted at me: 'You dirty Jew bastard, how dare you!' Now I will tell you a funny thing."

"I don't doubt it at all," said Rosa. But he was too deep in his story to be disturbed.

"A funny thing. Most men would be angry or very much dismayed if their mother called them a Jew bastard. Not I. At first I felt an inclination to be angry, because of the excitement and the cup-smashing, but then the words penetrated. I might have taken them just as an insult, but I didn't. They held all at once a strange meaning for me. A light of hope went up in my heart. I wasn't angry and I was far from dismayed. 'Mother,' I said, 'what do you mean?' Suddenly she forgot all about the war. She leaned over the table and began to sob. 'My poor boy, my poor boy!' And finally she told me. The schoolteacher Fröhlich, whom I had always hated, was not my real father. 'Paulchen, Paulchen,' she said. I can remember every word. 'Forgive me. It was in the terrible dark days of the Weimar Republic. The streets were full of Jews, the cafés were full of Jews, they were rich, handsome; in

those days you couldn't tell one thing from another. Your real father, Paulchen, was a Jew. . . ."

"All at once I understood everything, my feelings in the Hitler Youth and the army. Do you know what it is to move through the world without a soul and then suddenly to find a soul? I was beside myself with joy. I fell down on my knees and thanked my mother. 'Mother,' I cried, 'you have given me my life. . . .'"

"And then I suppose," Rosa said, "she threw you out of the house."

HE PAUSED to think a moment. Then: "You are very wise. Wise with the wisdom of our mother Rachel. How did you know? . . . Well, actually it was more complicated. I tried to find out about my father. She wouldn't tell me anything. She refused to talk about that black dog who had sullied a German woman. I forbade her to speak in such terms of my sainted father. And then . . . well, then she threw me out and I haven't seen her since. But I was right."

"Right?"

"Yes. We did lose the war."

Rosa sat silent for a time as Fröhlich looked hopefully up at her. She felt pleasantly at peace, though she could not have said why. He sensed her sympathy but wished for her to say something.

"I have decided to call myself Saul instead of Paul," he said. She let the remark pass.

At length she stood up and crossed over to where he sat. She rested her hand on his head and spoke with a warmth she scarcely knew: "Paulchen," she said. "Paulchen, do you know, I have never heard such a funny story in all my life."

Funny, she said, but she did not laugh. He was baffled by the incongruity.

"Funny?" he pleaded. "You mean ironical? The irony of fate?"

"My poor boy. I mean funny ridiculous. I have never heard such a preposterous story in all my life."

She spoke with the same warmth, but now he began to be offended.

"Then why don't you laugh?"

"Maybe because it's too funny to laugh at. When the American boys make jokes I laugh. But this! I can only shake my head."

"You think it's not true? You think I'm not sincere?"

She sat down beside him. "True? Sincere?" she said softly. "What does it matter?"

This was intolerable to him. A little squeak issued from his throat. In a swift, unbroken movement he fell on his knees and began to wail.

"Hush," she said. "The landlady."

He sobbed more softly now, but no less piteously. His long hair completely hid his face. She brushed the hair away with her hand and said: "There now!" But he thrust her hand aside and went on sobbing. "You've got to believe me."

"Why? What does it matter?"

"You've got to believe me. You are a Jew. You've got to accept me as a Jew."

"My poor boy!"

He continued to sob. She knew that when someone is sobbing at your feet you should try to make him stop. Perhaps he was suffering, perhaps he was not suffering, he might be a clown or a fool, or some new kind of petty crook, but in whatever case, she should put an end to this sobbing. Yet it rather pleased her. Apparently she had something he wanted—her Jewishness. It had always been a misfortune, but now someone wanted it.

Questionable as was everything about him, he gave her a pleasant feeling. Who was she to judge him? People, ach, people! Better not judge them at all.

"Listen to me, Paulchen," she said. He looked up, he wanted very much to be consoled. "I believe you," she said. He clasped her knees in gratitude, his sobs subsided to a little gurgle. She went on. "I believe you, but then what? To be a Jew is just an unfortunate accident. To me it means nothing else. I never set foot in a synagogue, I never fasted on the Day of Atonement, I never kept the Passover. What do you want of me?"

She spoke only the truth, but not in an attitude of confession. She spoke, she thought, in cold blood, in order to see what would happen.

He leaped to his feet and drew her up to him. His eyes were still red with weeping but his face was radiant. He tossed back his hair and cried out: "I will teach you to be a Jew. We will learn together."

Again she had the feeling that it was too funny for laughter. "Perhaps," she said. "Who knows?" Then she drew away from

him and filled her washbasin from the pitcher. "Better wash your face, Paulchen." He removed his coat and tie. His chest was narrow, his arms rather frail. Imagine that poor boy on the Russian front! He doused his face and hair in water, she gave him a towel and he took a comb from his jacket pocket.

Now he would have to be leaving, and she knew she felt sorry. She went out into Frau Griesgram's kitchen and looked at the clock. She came back all a-flutter and said: "Goodness, Paulchen, it's ten o'clock. They'll arrest you. It's after curfew." She wondered whether he had figured all this out, she didn't put it past him, but what did it matter?

"You can stay here if you like. I wouldn't want them to arrest you. But be very quiet."

Frau Griesgram, she thought, would know but would pretend not to.

MR. JOSEPH FIEDLER, civilian, lived at the officers' billet in the Hotel Roter Hahn. When possible, he eschewed the pinks and dark-browns of the officer's uniform and wore plain olive-drab with only the US collar insignia to distinguish him from the lowly GI and keep him out of the trouble the GI invariably got into.

He sauntered down the Hauptstrasse on his way to work. In the first days his gait had been alien and uncertain. What was he, Joe Fiedler, bohemian and odd-jobber around the arts, doing in this uniform, in this dusty-pink conquered city? But now he walked with the smiling solidity of the citizen, greeted at almost every step by this one and that one: "Guten Morgen, Herr Fiedler" . . . "Guten Morgen, Herr Leutnant" . . . "Guten Morgen, Herr Hauptmann." On the finest days he rose to the rank of major. Fiedler basked, though not without reserve, in this new figure of himself: respected citizen, canny observer. He looked at the shop fronts and knew which places were soon to be de-Nazified; he gave the elegant, sickly-looking Herr Stubenrauch a cheery good morning and thought: you are going to be arrested in a day or two, *mon cher*. He growled "'n Morgen" at the elderly Centrist Lindenblatt, striking terror into the old man's bones, and thought: you will probably be our first minister of education for the State of Baden.

Fiedler was heavily built, his face was round with a Mongoloid cast. He tried to give his eyes an empty look, even practicing sometimes before the mirror. He knew he was an accident, not part of the system he represented. (Imagine bohemian Joe Fiedler, supported by the prestige of a great army, arbiter of morality, judge of political rectitude, sleuth, prosecutor, respected citizen.) The country was full of accidents in those days.

On every road and every bridge, people were in motion; it was spring, the war was over, the Third Reich was finished, right now there was no Reich at all, just disorder, blessed disorder. The next town, the next day might bring life. In the villages the girls smiled. But order would return, the life of the roads would die down, the accidents would be swept away. The girls would keep smiling but the freshness of expectation would be gone from the smile.

Fiedler was amused, or sickened, by his role. "I personally am not a conqueror. I am not a liberator either." ("What then?") "I am an irony."

Fiedler's office was above a German printing shop, a dusty obscure room just to his liking. Germans of all sorts streamed in and out, some for interviews about their political complexion, plans, state of mind, some to ask favors. It had got about that this American was polite and obliging; if nothing else, he could be counted on to explain regulations. But he was not always polite. Sometimes, when he had a report to write, or when he was just sickened at the figure he was cutting, he would close his door and let people wait for hours in the corridor, or worse, he would let Captain Lovely, his assistant, take care of them. Captain Lovely knew barely enough German for his romantic needs. He was a good-natured man, he would smile hard and try to understand; but when he failed and the visitor insisted, he would grow indignant and shout. It was always the same. This occurred in the room adjoining Fiedler's. Fiedler would sit at his desk and rub his hands.

TRUE opportunism is organic," Fiedler wrote. "The successful opportunist does not say to himself: Circumstances have changed, I must adapt myself. Such opportunists are easily exposed, they forget and

contradict themselves in a conversation of any length; they may even blunder in filling out a Military Government questionnaire. Your true opportunist is perfectly sincere, because imperceptibly the changed circumstances have remodeled his consciousness, his very being. But if the man is sincere, it is argued, how can you call him an opportunist? I call him an opportunist because not only his professed opinions but his whole nature changes with each change of circumstances; his character has no bony structure. If he changed only once, very well. But he will change as often as circumstances permit.

"I have a case in mind, one Paul Fröhlich, a fugitive from the Russian zone. His story: his mother revealed to him in the summer of 1944 that his real father was not his official father but a Jewish lover. How convenient. He claims that he suspected his Jewish blood all along and now demonstrates a most extraordinary Jewish consciousness. Today conscious opportunists everywhere are remembering that they once helped an elderly Jew across the street. Fröhlich has *become* a Jew, and I am convinced that he is sincere, that he has profited by a real hallucination. The question is: would altered circumstances not only change his 'sincere' opinions, but perhaps also modify or wipe out his hallucination. . . ."

Fiedler threw down his pencil in disgust. "Lord," he muttered, "here I go being profound again!" He had often been commended for his reports; a psychology professor was in charge of higher headquarters. "I know what the devil wants and I give it to him. At best it will be buried in the archives, at worse he will publish a book on the German mind."

He went into the adjoining room where Captain Lovely, a well-cut officer with prematurely gray hair, was paring his nails. "Lovely," he said, "do you think I'm an opportunist?"

Lovely laughed urbanely. "Oh you intellectuals. You'll be the death of me. Why?"

"These damn reports I send up to Smithsonian. I know what he wants so I give it to him."

"You tell the truth, don't you?"

Fiedler saw that he had come to the wrong man, that is, he hadn't wanted to talk to any man but to himself through a

human presence. And now this idiot, this fop, this skirt-chaser in pinks was obtruding his personality. Fiedler felt one of his black rages coming on.

"Lord, man, there are so many truths!"

"I don't get it," said Lovely. "Either a thing is true or it isn't."

Fiedler glared at him murderously. Lovely smiled like a happy child. "The way I look at it is this," he went on. "You have a job of work to do. No one can call you an opportunist because you do your job. Just like the rest of us. I wouldn't want anybody calling me names because I did my job. . . ."

"What job?" Was mixing up the files and carrying messages to the wrong people a job?

"Oh, I do the best I can," said Lovely disarmingly. For a moment Fiedler was disarmed, but then this very lapse infuriated him even more. "Oh yes, your job," he said suddenly. "I want you to run up to Neckarbischofsheim with a load of questionnaires."

"Sure," said Lovely. "Neckar what? Where is it?"

"You ought to know," said Fiedler with military severity. "It's in our territory."

He strode over to the wall map and Lovely followed. Fiedler himself had to hunt around some before he found the place. A month before, in surveying his territory, he had made a note of the fact that this remote *Kreisstadt* would have to be covered some day. And now the name popped spontaneously from the pigeon-hole of his memory.

"Good God," said Lovely. "That's a whole day's trip. I've got a date tonight."

"Your date can keep. Do you realize that we haven't the faintest idea what's going on in Neckarbischofsheim? They may be hatching Nazi plots. They may be trying to bring back the Holy Roman Empire. You'll probably get another date in Neckarbischofsheim."

"Hell, you just want to date Lieschen yourself. I'll go tomorrow."

"My dear Captain Lovely," said Fiedler with a righteous indignation that embarrassed him. "You have a job of work to do. You *will* go to Neckarbischofsheim today." He turned to leave the room. "Besides," he flung back, "your Lieschen is cross-eyed."

HE RETURNED to his desk and picked up his pencil. "It will be interesting," he

wrote, "to see whether this Fröhlich. . . ." Someone was standing in the doorway. A sign said: "Don't knock when the door is open." The caller had raised his hand to knock, then perceived the sign, and now stood transfixed with his arm in midair. Fiedler smiled. "I called the devil and he came," he said. "Come in, I was just thinking about you."

"Am I the devil?"

"No, that's Heine. Poor forgotten Heine."

"We Jews will make him remembered."

This he said with such an air of enthusiasm that Fiedler, in spite of himself, felt a strange contagion.

"Yes, we Jews. . . ." he mused.

"Then you are a Jew?" It was plain that Fröhlich wanted to embrace him.

"That's neither here nor there," said Fiedler in a tone that was definitive but not unfriendly. "Now what have you come to see me about?"

"To thank you."

"For what?"

"Well—in connection with Fräulein Bernauer. . . ."

"Rosa? What about her?"

"She is wonderful. It was as though I had never before in my life met a human being."

"I see."

Then that was the source of his enthusiasm. He was in love. And surely he could not be in love unless Rosa had given him some encouragement. But how was it possible? Rosa was intelligent and above all perceptive. He had sent Fröhlich to amuse her. That was what came of playing God.

"Oh yes," Fiedler said with what seemed to him like an oily smile. "She is a fine girl. I'm glad you liked her."

Perhaps Fröhlich sensed Fiedler's coldness. The brightness went out of his face, he stared at the floor. This rather pleased Fiedler. He felt suddenly jaunty.

"As long as you're here," he said cheerily, "you can help me with a little investigation I'm carrying on."

"Help you? Why, nothing would please me more."

"I have here a list of names, men who are familiar to you, I think. I want you to tell me which ones, in your opinion, are Jewish. You shouldn't have any trouble. . . ."

"Oh no," said Fröhlich radiantly. It was clear that he enjoyed being put to the test.

"I will read the names. If the man is, or was, Jewish, say yes, otherwise no. Are you ready?"

"Yes."

"Roosevelt?"

"Yes."

"Eisenhower?"

"Yes."

"Montgomery?"

"No."

"Morgenthau?"

"Yes."

"Churchill?"

"No."

"Patton?"

"No."

"Wolfgang von Goethe?"

Fröhlich hesitated. This was new. A smile of delighted savoring hung on his lips. He looked up. He looked back. "Ich bin der Geist der stets verneint," he intoned, as if fearing a disappointment. "Walpurgisnacht? Götz? West-Östlicher Diwan?" He smiled again. And then, with a lyricism that struck Fiedler as painfully Teutonic, he burst forth:

*"Welch ein Glück geliebt zu werden,
Und zu l-i-e-b-e-n welch ein Glück!"*

"There can be no doubt," he said. "Isn't it strange that I never knew? We were left in total darkness."

"Yes or no?" asked Fiedler with malicious, very unobjective impatience.

"Yes."

Fiedler could have predicted these results, but he was utterly amazed to have his prediction fulfilled. What was he to do with this Fröhlich? Study him? Cultivate his mania? Puncture it? He felt a sudden embarrassment in the presence of the phenomenon. "Er. . . ." he began aimlessly. But then he remembered Lovely. He must tell him he didn't have to go to Neckarbischofsheim. Besides, even Lovely would be amused at this thing. He picked up some papers at random and said: "Excuse me just a minute. I'll be back."

There was no sign of Captain Lovely. Fiedler went out and asked the printer's receptionist, who reported that he had gone off to Neckarhonigheim or some such place. "And he was in a very bad humor, too," she added. Fiedler went into Lovely's of-

fice and stood by the window, looking out at the crowds in the Hauptstrasse, racing past like tormented souls, trying to get something to eat, trying to exchange a first edition for a pair of second-hand shoes, trying to get a residence permit, overflowing the sidewalk and half-filling the narrow street, grazed by the constant stream of jeeps, trucks, staff cars. I must do good, he said to himself. My position here is idiotic, my only excuse is to do good. To begin with, I must make it up to Lovely. Can he help it if he's a fool? And maybe he does less harm than I do.

He went back to his office though he still had no idea what to do about Fröhlich. He offered him a cigarette, which Fröhlich accepted with disproportionate pleasure. There was no need, for the moment, to say anything about Fröhlich's recent recruits to the Jewish people, because Fröhlich seemed perfectly sure that his answers had been right. The main thing was to get rid of him.

"Did it ever occur to you," Fiedler asked without forethought, "that your mother may have made up that story just to torture you?" Fröhlich tried to speak, but Fiedler waved him down. "No, let me finish. She was a patriot, but even she was beginning to have her fears. What she wanted from you was encouragement. Maybe she did have an affair once with a Jew, maybe she still felt remorse. So in her anger she put together this revelation which she thought would hurt you more than anything else could."

Fröhlich smiled with the serenity of a man who has beheld the angels. "No," he said. "It is not possible. I cannot see into my mother's heart. But my own heart, my own heart's blood tells me that I am a Jew."

IN THE Military Government building, the former Rathaus, a long wooden table had been placed at the foot of the stairs. Behind the table sat a German policeman in a fairly well preserved Reichswehr uniform and a Military Government armband; beside him two German civilians. The only sign of American authority was a soldier with a carbine; he had pale lifeless eyes and his heart was hunting rabbits in the hills of North Carolina. People kept asking him questions and from time to time he said "Nein." Suppliants streamed into the hall,

only those with some kind of pink pass were allowed up the stairs. The Germans behind the table all talked at once, saying: "In welcher Angelegenheit—on what business?" and "Nein, Sie dürfen nicht herein—you can't come in." It never ceased. As Fiedler entered, an old woman spotted him and spoke to him in Polish. He understood no Polish, but here people wanted only one thing, permission to go upstairs. Upstairs was authority, reason, peace and happiness. "Sure," he said, "come with me." It gave him pleasure to harass the German guards, who were trying so hard, in unsettled circumstances, to scoop out a new bureaucratic rut for themselves. The old woman poured forth incomprehensible thanks. "The lady is with me," he said to the guards. "Jawohl, Herr Hauptmann!" Now he had her in, what next? She would want a room or a ration card, or permission to live or not to live in some DP camp, or she wanted to join her son in the French zone, or she wanted to be repatriated or more likely not to be repatriated, or she wanted to lodge a complaint against a Russian who had robbed her, for the Russian DP's were carrying on a private war of their own against the Polish DP's. If he abandoned her, she might wander round the corridors for hours. He remembered then that the utilities officer was Polish-born. He walked into his office with the old lady in tow. "Tommy," he said, "I'm sure you haven't done your good deed today. I've brought you a nice old Polish lady who might have been your grandmother; she has terrible troubles. I want you to be very nice to her and try to give her everything she wants. If she wants to leave town, let her. If she wants some Russian drawn and quartered, arrange it."

"Sit down, Madam," said the utilities officer in Polish.

"Madam!" The old woman laughed. She was the happiest old woman in the State of Baden. "This doesn't cost you a nickel," the officer turned to Fiedler with an affectation of bitterness. "Hell," said Fiedler, "this is the American way. Every day you try to make one person happy. This is the happy woman of the day."

ROSA was immersed in a pile of questionnaires. A corporal sat on her desk

making conversation, but she stuck to her papers. She picked up a questionnaire, glanced through it with a practiced eye, and tossed it into an "approved" or "disapproved" pile. "Heads will roll," she said cheerily as Fiedler came in. "You mean me?" said the corporal. "This is Corporal Nightlife," she said to Fiedler. "He helps me by my work." "My name is Macaulay, sir," said the corporal. "Bad boy," said Rosa. "You said me your name is Nightlife." "Nightlife is an endemic nickname in the American Army," said Fiedler ponderously. "The younger men find it glamorous." "I think it's a beautiful nickname," said Rosa. Fiedler was annoyed. He had a proprietary feeling about Rosa and disliked seeing her joking with a GI.

But what annoyed him more was a change he thought he found in her. She seemed to have lost the spectral quality that had first awakened his interest, and what remained, he asked himself, but an ordinary, rather happy young girl? And then he was irritated with himself for such unworthy sentiments, because theoretically he believed that men were equal and women should be happy. As usual, when such conflicts arose in him, he began to sulk and glower. "I'll be going along," said the corporal. "Come soon back," said Rosa. "Excuse please this growly bear. He is sometimes nice." "See you again, sir," said the corporal amiably. "Yes, forgive me, I've had a bad day," said Fiedler, disarmed.

Knowing what he wanted to talk to her about and regarding himself as a blunt man, Fiedler thought it would be easy. Only now did he realize that he had no right to pry into her affairs. He sat gloomily facing her, while she smiled, very much at her ease.

I WANT to apologize," he said suddenly—the oblique approach.

"Apologize?"

"For sending that clown to see you."

"Oh, Paulchen."

He hadn't expected that; the Germans are slow to use first names, not to mention the tender or disparaging or tenderly disparaging diminutive.

"Yes, probably he is a clown," she said thoughtfully. Then she leaned back and sighed. "Ach, ja. . . ."

"It's an odd relationship," he said. "He goes Jewish and you go German. Ach ja. . . ." he mimicked. "You sound like Gretchen."

"I'm very happy," she said simply.

"Rosa, I came here to warn you—"

"I thought you came here to apologize."

He laughed. "You're very sharp . . . about some things."

"Well, go ahead and warn me. I think I'll like it."

He drew his chair up to her desk, took a pencil, and gave clarity and emphasis to his thoughts by diddling numbers on a scrap of paper. He hated Fröhlich with a vehemence which he was at a loss to account for. Now he would flay him alive.

"This Paulchen of yours honestly believes that the Jewish century has dawned. And this belief has miraculously turned him into a Jew. It's not just a normal trimming of sails, no, it's his whole being, his blood. His blood tells him this, his blood tells him that. . . ."

She laughed with unconcealed pleasure. "That's just what I told him. He's ridiculous. . . ."

"His blood tells him some very funny things. For instance that the late President Roosevelt was Jewish. . . ."

"Wasn't he?"

He gasped. First he thought she was joking, but then it was plain that she meant it. He jumped up with clenched fists and made for the door. But no, he wasn't going to let her off so easy.

"Idiot!" he roared. "Goebbels told you that and you believed it. You think his name was Rosenfeld too. And that's why you fall for this slimy little Nazi. Do you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to resign. Because this country is hopeless. Jews, Gentiles, DP's, everybody."

He saw that she was crying and stopped. This was no way for an official to behave, certainly not for a sleuth. Besides, is it her fault that for ten years the Nazis sealed her off from the outside world? He went over and laid his hand on her head. "I am very, very sorry," he said. "I have been very stupid."

Instantly conciliated, she sobbed on for a little while. "Life has been very hard for us," she said. Then she looked up and smiled. "I didn't think you could shout so loud. Like a Feldwebel."

"Like a Feldwebel," he agreed.

"Sit down," she said, "and I will tell you about this. I am not as stupid as you think,

though maybe it was very stupid of me to think that the president of a great country could be a Jew named Rosenfeld. I have thought a long long time about some things and no one has helped me. Not even you. I have lived all my life in Germany. The Germans hated me and I hated them, but I am not anything but a German. I'm not a German, but I'm not anything else. Now Paulchen comes along with his clowning. It's a miracle. He too is not a German and he is not anything else. How can there be anyone like Paulchen? It is not possible but it happened. And he loves me. He is trying to be a Jew; well, I shall try to be a Jew." She paused wearily and swallowed. "I think we'll go to Palestine together."

He was filled with compassion. "I understand," he said. "Or at least I half-understand. My experience has been very different. I am a third-generation American and a Jew. To me Jewishness means one thing, dispersion, and dispersion means rejection of all nationalisms, even our own. America is just a geographical concept and to my generation a tremendous piece of good luck. . . . But I do know that whatever feelings you have are real." He felt oppressed by emotion. And he knew that his words did not have much meaning. But the speech had to be rounded out. "You know I'm your friend," he said.

She said nothing. Perhaps she didn't know.

"Call on me if you need any help."

"I need your help right now. Find him a job."

"There aren't any jobs," he began, but instantly changed his tone. "All right," he said. "I'll find him a job."

FIEDLER walked back to the office along the river. He was very displeased with himself and felt unable to face the "Guten Tags" on the Hauptstrasse. The riverbank was the province of lonely American soldiers and lonely German girls, eyeing each other with longing in those pre-fraternization days. He plodded along with his heavy, rolling gait, looking his most Mongoloid and terrifying. Groups of girls tittered, they tittered all day long, but now he was sure they were tittering at him. He thought he caught the word "verliebt" but he was not sure. Was that how he looked? He wanted to look

odious, he wanted the populace to scatter and run at his approach, but he only looked "verliebt." Maybe they were right. Could he be in love with Rosa? Maybe so, but it took Paul Fröhlich, the color brought to her cheeks by Paul Fröhlich, to make him aware of it. For all its forlornness, the thought cheered him a little, because if he was in love, that gave him some business in these people's lives; then he was not such a meddling outsider.

AFTER work, Rosa, carrying a hideous black oilskin bag, emerged from the Rathaus, with difficulty restraining her desire to run—not on account of any onlookers, because that summer in Germany it was customary to run, but on account of her own critical eye which detected the childlike eagerness with which she, a deeply disillusioned girl who knew better, anticipated a meeting with a demented (or scheming) young man. Very well, if you must, said the critical eye, begrudgingly lenient, but do me this one favor: don't run. Yet the critical eye could do nothing to quell her terror that he might not be there.

There he was, however, tidy and trim, having spent the whole day washing, drying, ironing his shirt. Radiantly he presented her with a corsage of forlorn-looking asters; it was a poor year for flowers. The hours were few till curfew, they started off at once, past the university, along the cool, leafy Anlage. At length they turned into a stony path that led up the mountain. Rosa found the climb arduous, she gasped for breath, her cheeks turned splotchy pale. But this was a pilgrimage, and in this city that lies in a bowl all pilgrimages are upward. Ultimately the jagged stones gave way to smooth earth, the path leveled off for a space. To one side lay a small orchard. First stop. They sat down in a grassy patch of sunlight and immediately unpacked the ungainly bag in which she had stowed the fabulous remnants of her Military Government lunch. She herself ate little, the exertion made her feel sick. But what joy to watch Paulchen eat. The picnic over, they arose and embraced with some awkwardness. Then off again, the hours were few till curfew. The climb was soon over, a path, then a roadway led along the side of the mountain, below them lay the city in dusty

violet shadow. When, hand in hand, they reached the crumbled castle, it glowed like pink icing in the evening sun. A path led higher, to a broad promenade. This was the end of the pilgrimage. Here they might rest (standing up) and look down at the sugary walls and archways, the flickering city lights and the misty river beyond.

"Who built this castle?" Fröhlich asked.

"I don't know," said Rosa faintly. "How stupid of me. I'll look it up. Or I'll ask Fiedler."

"Strange," said Fröhlich. "Who built it, who smashed it? Neither of us knows. This is our pilgrimage and we don't know what it is. It's not our castle. We are all alone in a strange land."

"Silly boy," said Rosa. She patted his cheek and was startled to feel a tear. He drew her hand away and tossed his head defiantly.

"Du bist mein Vaterland," he said suddenly, and now there was comfort in his voice. She wanted to laugh, but not a sound would come out.

They turned and hurried downward in a heroic race with the curfew.

CAPTAIN LOVELY had been gone for four days and Fiedler thought of sending out a tracer; he tried a phone call to Neckarbischofsheim but the connection was impossible to establish. He thought occasionally that Lovely had been ambushed but could not concentrate on a possibility so grotesque. Maybe one of his inevitable women turned out to be the widow of a fallen SS-man—a razor blade beneath the pillow or a dram of ersatz coffee and Lovely's lovely career was prematurely ended.

Then on the fifth afternoon there was a great commotion on the stairs, and it was Lovely, followed by a bevy of drivers, each carrying a case of wine. When the last case appeared, Lovely stopped the bearer and said grandly: "You boys keep this one for yourselves." The drivers thanked him and bounded away. "A very successful trip," he reported. "I'm deeply grateful to you."

"Where'd you get the wine?"

"In a castle."

"My dear boy," said Fiedler. "The war is over. This looting must stop."

"It wasn't looting. It was a gift. From a very charming person, I might add."

"I don't doubt it," said Fiedler, pleased that there was no longer any need for him to feel guilty on Lovely's account.

"She's a countess," said Lovely. "The real article. Charming."

"What does she want of you?"

"You have a nasty mind, Fiedler. I flatter myself that she took a shine to me. . . . Well, the truth is that she wants me to find her a flat here, a simple matter. . . ."

"Have you looked into her political complexion?"

"Well, no, I really didn't have time. But a person so charming. . . ."

"And Neckarbischofsheim?"

"A delightful little place."

The very same day, Fiedler found Paulchen a job in Pfaff's Bookstore. Herr Pfaff was a prisoner in France. His wife refused to set foot in "that dusty old place" and left its management to her daughter Emmi. Emmi had long shapely legs, an astonishingly high bust, flowing blonde hair, and empty cerulean eyes. She walked out on Sunday in a floppy, broad-brimmed hat, spotless white gloves up to her elbows, a parasol. A splendid creature. She had only to appear in the distance for the soldiers to outdo themselves whistling.

She said to Fiedler: "What a bore to be shut up in that shop. I want to *enjoy* the spring." She said: "Ach, the Americans are sweet." She said: "A woman only loves once. But she can flirt so often." She said: "We had no idea such things were going on." And it was true that no one in her family had belonged to anything that was not compulsory. She said: "My dream is to visit Monte Carlo. A friend sent me a pair of silk stockings from there. Genuine *pas de soie*. Prima." She said: "Can you give me a ride to Schwetzingen? I know where I can get one hundred pounds of potatoes." She said: "Can you teach me to dance the rhumba? We'll close the shop and no one will see us." She said, after painful mind-searching that brought a charming wrinkle to her brow: "No, I am not a friend of the Jews, but I think they should have been asked politely to leave, just like any strangers."

Fiedler rubbed his hands: We shall see, we shall see. When Rosa came and thanked him, he was contrite. But when she had gone, he found a number of considerations

to restore his balance. He knew of no other jobs at the moment. From his own official point of view, he would be "observing" Fröhlich under ideal conditions. And if Paulchen collapsed under the impact of the anti-Semitic siren, was it not a kindness to Rosa in the end?

He blotted out this last consideration with disgust. "How do I know what is a kindness to Rosa?"

That night he got drunk with Captain Lovely on a few bottles of the countess's wine.

THE next evening, Fröhlich called at Fiedler's office. He sat down and accepted a cigarette, but was slow to speak. Fiedler drove all expression from his face, turned half away, and watched the other closely—a little professional trick. No, Fröhlich did not seem upset, merely tired. He had been sorting out politically undesirable books, that was tiring. He seemed thoughtful. Fiedler thought he even looked intelligent, and he would never have said that before.

"You enjoy your job?" Fiedler asked.

"Why, yes."

"And Fräulein Pfaff?"

"Oh yes, a fine person."

"And attractive," said Fiedler with a faint smile.

Fröhlich seemed to ponder the matter.

"Yes, perhaps. Yes, certainly. Definitely attractive."

He lapsed into silence. Fiedler just wondered.

"We have quite a few books set aside," Fröhlich said then with enthusiasm. "I'd appreciate it if you looked them over to see if they're really forbidden."

"And your instinct?"

"Oh yes." The old light was in Fröhlich's eyes. "I think I'm right. I'm almost sure, but in such an important matter. . . ."

"I'll come."

Again silence.

"Your instinct deceives you sometimes," he said. "Maybe the voice of the blood doesn't always tell the truth."

"The voice of the blood?"

Fiedler's head swam. The dull mask he had drawn over his face became his true face. He did not want to do this.

"Or maybe your mother was lying . . . to hurt you. . . ."

Fröhlich grinned. He seemed to have himself well in hand. "Why do you keep wanting to make my mother a liar? You know, I should be angry, but after all you've done for me. . . ."

One sign of weakness and Fiedler knew he would have stopped. But how could Fröhlich grin like that?

Now Fiedler raised his voice. First he asked himself if he was angry. Then he was angry.

"Either your mother was lying—or is it just the voice of your blood that tells lies?" Terrifying in his rage, he turned to face Fröhlich and roared: "Roosevelt was not a Jew, Eisenhower is not a Jew, Goethe was not a Jew. Democracy is not a Jewish institution. This isn't the Jewish century. I hope it isn't anybody's century. . . ."

Attracted by the tumult, Captain Lovely stood in the doorway. That much German he understood. "Ik owk bin kein Jude—I'm not a Jew either," he said sweetly.

Fröhlich took it well. The German soldier is accustomed to being roared at. "I was mistaken," he said. "We are so misinformed in Germany. So pitifully misinformed. Ach ja, there is good in all denominations." He held out his hand and Fiedler grasped it. Then with a military click of the heels he left the room.

ERUDITION was rampant that summer in Germany. Everything readable was gone from the bookshops, learned monographs were having their hour. None too eager to enter the store, Fiedler gazed spellbound at *The Idea of the State in Polybius* and *East Indian Plants and Shrubs*, which were featured in the window. They would be sold to lonely widows who would hand them down to their children. And who knows, who knows? If no new books appeared, a whole new civilization might arise out of learned monographs.

Fiedler went in. The front of the shop was empty. He glanced vacantly through the shelves. No doubt Emmi and her new employee were in the park, enjoying the spring. He would come back another time. Then he heard vague rummaging in the back room, the second hand department before everything became second hand. He was going in when he heard Emmi's bubbling, trilling voice: "Toss it down, Jüd-

lein (little Jew). I'll catch it." Fiedler entered, prepared for one of his explosions. Fröhlich was standing on a stepladder. In one hand Emmi held a book, in the other Fröhlich's knee. Fröhlich turned his face, and for one moment Fiedler saw the smile of a tortured, obsequious Jew.

"Ah, Herr Fiedler," said Emmi without apparent embarrassment, "how nice of you to send Herr Fröhlich. He's the sweetest thing. We flirt and work and the time passes."

Fröhlich climbed down from the ladder and said with perfect calm: "It's kind of you to come. We have a few books here that ought to be removed, we think."

The books were neatly assembled on several shelves. Fiedler glanced swiftly over them, took out one or two, scanned a passage here and there, nodded mechanically, then said: "I think you've done very well." He turned to leave. "Fräulein Pfaff," he said abruptly. "May I speak to you for a moment?"

"I shall continue with my work," said Fröhlich with dignity.

She followed him to the front of the shop. "Not here," he said roughly, and drew her out into the street.

"Oh, you're angry with me," she pouted.

He turned to her with his most terrifying glare. "Why did you call him 'Jüdlein'?"

"Oh," she tittered. "Is that all? It was just a joke, a little joke between us. He doesn't mind."

"Why?" he repeated terribly.

"Oh, don't be such a bear. It was a joke. First he said he was a Jew, then he said maybe he wasn't, he couldn't be sure. Why, of course he's not a Jew. He looks like Baldur von Schirach."

"All right," said Fiedler. "But if you want to keep running a bookstore, don't call anybody that."

He saw that at bottom she was frightened. That pleased him. "I'll be good, Mr. Gestapo," she said. Then with her most alluring smile: "You're sweet."

FIEDLER had finished work and was wondering how to spend an execrable evening when the door echoed a brisk knock and a dark, statuesque woman in a tweed travelling suit entered.

"You must be Mr. Fiedler," she said in

English with only a trace of accent. "I am the Countess von Hohenfels-Schabernack, you may call me Mitzi. Is Captain Lovely at hand?"

She was a woman in her late thirties, with large regular features that would have seemed classical if not for a certain floridity. One fancied her galloping over the moors on a fiery steed. She filled the room, she lifted up Fiedler's heart. Small wonder that Military Government is corrupt, he told himself; then his guard fell, there was no question in his smile.

Lovely stood in the doorway. "But Mitzi. . . ."

She enfolded him in her presence. "Maurice!"

Lovely squirmed with delight and embarrassment.

"But Mitzi. . . ."

"But Mitzi, but Mitzi . . . aren't you glad to see me?"

"My dear Mitzi, I shall always be glad to see you. But you said you'd wait to hear from me. A suitable flat isn't so easy to organize. . . ."

"Suitable! I don't expect it to be suitable. Some hovel will do. I just couldn't wait. Don't you know what day it is?"

"Your birthday?" asked Lovely with a guilty look.

"No, silly. I'm beyond the age of birthdays. It is the festival of love. It is the end of non-fraternization. We may be seen in the streets together. *Quelle joie!* The banks of the Neckar are a garden of loving couples. How quickly they have met. *Amor vincit omnia.* Dear little Cupid has taken his stand on the Philosophenweg and is shooting his darts across at us. And the merry-hearted American children, how eagerly vulnerable they are! What dear children."

"It is indeed an occasion," said Lovely, in the hope of halting the flow of her words. "Will you have some of your own wine. . . ."

". . . or some of mine from *outré-Rhin*?" Fiedler completed, to show that he was not going to be solemn that evening.

"No, please," said the Countess, "it must be mine."

The bottle was brought, uncorked, poured.

"To the dear children," proposed the Countess.

The men raised their glasses and nodded

but could not bring themselves to repeat the words.

"Ah," the Countess pouted after they had drunk. "You do not like my toast. But to me . . . I will tell you . . . I was here when the American troops marched in. The next day they were playing baseball in the streets. What other soldiers would have done that? I said to myself: this is the dawn of a new era. Under the Republic we were ruled by old men; under the Third Reich by raw youth; this is the children's hour."

"And you think you can handle the children?" Fiedler asked, drawing up slightly on his smile.

"You are no child," she said.

"And what, in your opinion, was the dominant age group under the Empire?" Fiedler asked. His mouth still smiled, but such questions inevitably cast a veil over his eyes.

"Come, come," Lovely pleaded. "Can't we"

She knew what was in the air but she rose majestically and answered without a moment's doubt. "The Empire was the era of mature men. I propose"

"No," said Fiedler. "We will not drink to the German Empire!"

"No," said Lovely placatingly. "Don't you see, Mitzi, that wouldn't do at all."

Then Fiedler saw Rosa in the doorway. Lord, he thought, how much of this nonsense has she heard? He rose quickly and said: "I've got to be going now"

Lovely said: "For God's sake, Fiedler, where am I going to put Mitzi for the night?"

The Countess said: "Oh, I have offended you."

But Fiedler, unable to bear this woman's self-assured charm for one moment longer, dashed from the room. "Try Frau Müller's couch," he called to Lovely. "Bon soir, Frau Gräfin."

He pressed Rosa's hand, he was infinitely glad to see her.

"I didn't mean to take you away from your friends, it could have waited," she said.

It was not until they were down in the courtyard that she handed him the note.

"My beloved Rosa:

Alas, it was not to be. When you find

this, I shall have left for the British zone. Believe that I love you and don't try to find me. It cannot be"

"And now he's gone," she said.

"And you blame me?"

"Blame. Blame. What difference does it make? You don't know what you're doing."

"But you hate me?"

"Oh, don't be so egotistical. Think of him, poor fellow. In Cologne, Essen, Hanover. In a cellar somewhere under a pile of stones . . . you can't even find the entrances to those places. . . ."

They turned off the crowded Haupt-

strasse into a cool, damp side street leading to the Neckar. The riverbank was still bright with sun, and there, as advertised, couples, hundreds of couples, strolled about. Mingled with the military traffic on the bridge, German trucks rattled and chugged, packed with standing men and women.

Fiedler could think of nothing, absolutely nothing to say. Never in his life had he felt so completely lost. For a long while they walked in silence, a man in uniform, a girl in an ill-fitting print dress. At length she pressed his hand and said: "Oh come, you're just a poor devil yourself. You can talk to me."

HORSES

J. deMORELAND

THESE is the hour when
Meat has left the bone, and
Simple folk are rotting in a
Greater time. All death is great
Save that endured in life.
The weed is dry, the grasses
Wet with dew; the lily waves
And drops a bitter draught
Upon the ground.

The curving hill
Is rich with running horses,
Nut brown in the gift of sun, and
Wild-eyed with the joyous fear of
Life. Canopied like treasures
Of this space, tree-bowers lean
And curve a nook of cool peace.

There wild horses feed, and forget
The empty hours of the plain,
The gallop. Receding to sleep,
Before the morning turns up with
Slowly shortened shadows, they
Browse in the space of cool,
Refreshing night.

The chill of
Death strikes through the wake
Of early morning hours, the
Dread that's opposite of wakefulness'
Despair. Polluted puddles, empty
Grassless earth, dusk that's tired,
And all the downward day, fill
The dreams with loneliness, but
Horses do enrich the farthest curving hill.

J. deMORELAND was born in Washington, D. C., in 1918 and studied art in Washington and New York. He has worked as artist and writer on the *Washington Post*, *Washington Daily News*, and *Newsweek*. At present he is at work on a poetic drama.

ALASKA'S NUREMBERG LAWS

Congress Sanctions Racial Discrimination

FELIX S. COHEN

FOR the first time in our history, it has been decreed by Congress that a government bureau may seize the possessions of Americans solely because they belong to a minority race. That is the meaning of the Tongass Act, which deprives Alaskans of their land and timber if two or more of their grandparents were Indians, and which quietly became law on August 8, 1947.

In the House, the Tongass Timber Bill had been passed through a parliamentary maneuver at an early morning hour, usually devoted to prayer and to receiving communications, when hardly a dozen members were in their seats. In the Senate, four efforts to pass the bill by "unanimous consent" had failed. One by one the Senators who objected were threatened or cajoled into acquiescing; the final surrender came at two o'clock in the morning in the last minutes of the 1947 session of Congress, when Senator Watkins of Utah, head of the committee that had considered

the bill, wearily announced, at the prodding of Senator Taft, that he would not let his grave doubts as to the constitutionality of the measure stand in the way of its enactment.

The new law authorizes expropriation of Indian land and timber in Southeastern Alaska, which had been protected by federal legislation since 1884. The native owners of the land and timber that is to be sold will not be consulted. Money received for the property—true enough—will be taken up by the Treasury and owners can try to get it from Congress. But the Tongass Act confers no authority to pay out any such receipts, even if the property owner clearly establishes his title in court. Indeed, the federal bureaus concerned have decided that even before they sell the timber—and it may be a decade or a century before they do—the Indian owners have lost any right to cut logs on their own lands. Those who defy the ruling of the bureaus and cut trees on their own woodlots—whether for fuel, home building, boat construction, or totem pole carving—face the prospect of being sent to prison.

Until last August, no Congress had ever passed a law depriving a racially-defined group of its possessions. Even the wartime drive to imprison Americans of Japanese ancestry was a military action, not directed by Congress; and the most extreme of all Congressional expropriation acts—that which confiscated the property of the Mormon church sixty years ago—at least respected the property of individuals of the Mormon faith. Now for the first time in our national history, Congress has said that a man's right to individual and corporate property may be canceled if—as defined in

THE gap between American ideals and American practice has nowhere been more poignantly evident than in the unsavory history of our treatment of the Indians. Latest in a long and not yet ended series of injustices is the Tongass Timber Bill, which deprives Alaskans of their land and timber on a principle strikingly reminiscent of Germany's Nuremberg Laws. FELIX S. COHEN here speaks for these exploited Americans, and points out some ominous possibilities of this newest effort to give legal sanction to racial discrimination. Mr. Cohen, now practicing law in the District of Columbia, was until recently on the legal staff of the Department of Interior. He is the author of a treatise on Federal Indian Law, a book on legal philosophy (*Ethical Systems and Legal Ideals*), and numerous magazine articles. Mr. Cohen was born in New York in 1907, and studied at the City College of New York, Harvard, and Columbia Law School.

the statute—two or more of his grandparents were of a specified race.

What is done to Indians or Eskimos in Alaska today can be done to Negroes in the South tomorrow, and to Jews, Catholics, or descendants of non-Anglo-Saxon strains the day after tomorrow. For four centuries the Indian has served as the guinea pig for new forms of race discrimination in our land. If the land and timber of Alaskan Indians can be expropriated and turned over to a federal bureau, it is possible to pass other laws expropriating the property of other minorities.

HISTORY reminds us that the techniques of maltreatment and exploitation which buccaneers, businessmen, and bureaucrats developed years ago to deal with Indians in the New World were brought back, when perfected, to the motherland for use against its own citizenry. Modes of torture and destruction perfected in the New World racked the body and soul of Spain. Throughout Latin America the military and economic dictatorship, originally designed to hold the Indian in subjection and embellished by the moral language of trusteeship (*encomienda*), came to enslave white men and black men as well.

In our own land of freedom, modes of racial aggression that were tried out in California against Indians were effectively transferred, a decade or two later, to the newly arrived immigrants from China. The West Coast vigilante wars of the 1850's against the Indians did not come to an end when the Indians of California, reduced to a tiny fragment of a once prosperous population, were driven from their fertile gardens and opulent fishing places. The war continued, with only the victims changed: experts in violence do not usually retire when a war has been won. The Chinese inherited the role of the Indian as the race peril against which efforts of vigilante bands and race-conscious legislators might be enthusiastically directed. Out of this glorified racial violence came the first breach in the traditional American

policy of welcome to pilgrims from the Old World. That first breach, embodied in the Chinese Exclusion Laws of 1884, violated a solemn treaty with China, but a Californian on the Supreme Court who had led the fight for a Chinese Exclusion Law was able to persuade his brethren on the bench that a mere treaty should not stand in the way of accomplishing this high racial objective. So was proclaimed the principle, which has become the law of the land, that treaties with foreign nations or Indian tribes may be freely violated by Congress.

Successive elaborations of legalized xenophobia did not decline when the supply of Chinese victims failed. The hardy pioneers of the Pacific Coast soon selected the Japanese to fill the gap. And when the Japanese Exclusion Act, passed in violation of a "gentlemen's agreement," forced the racists to look in new directions for victims, Californians like the great Progressive Senator Hiram Johnson led the nation in new assaults against the revolutionary idea that all men are created equal. The Johnson immigration quota law established permanent discriminations against all immigrants who did not come from the British Isles. What was chiefly attractive about British immigrants was that they did not immigrate. As the only good Indian was a dead Indian, so the only good immigrant was the immigrant who stayed at home.

HUMAN intolerance takes many forms. Intolerance towards Catholics does not take the form of Jim Crow cars. Intolerance towards Jews does not ordinarily take the form of lynchings. Intolerance towards the Negro does not take the form of bars to naturalization, as does our intolerance to the Oriental, nor the form of expropriation of landholdings, as does our intolerance to the Indian. And yet, diverse as are the forms of intolerance, there is, underlying all of them, a common sense of irritation at the sight of those whom we have wronged. This irritation increases when the victim

steps out of the role in which we have placed him. Jim Crow cars, ghettos, restrictive covenants, concentration camps for the Nisei of the West Coast, racist immigration laws, these are normal reactions of a stricken public conscience.

Because racial intolerance leads to chain reactions which seriously threaten the destruction of civilization, it is important that we face up promptly to the question of justice and injustice in our legislation on race problems.

This is a difficult thing to do in post-war Washington. Words of sympathy for oppressed groups come cheaply, especially in the months before a national election. Congressmen find it easy to tell oppressed minorities how the President should redress their grievances. And it is just as easy for the President to tell oppressed minorities how Congress should redress grievances which, for one reason or another, the President does not desire to solve himself by the exercise of presidential powers. Lip service is easy enough; action based on vision and justice is another matter.

In Washington the flight from justice takes many forms, but underlying all these forms is the dogma that injustice or immorality is primarily a matter of feeling or emotion, and therefore never a legitimate concern of politics. In the language of the Washington bureaus, one must be "practical," and that means ignoring the lessons of yesterday and the hopes and fears of tomorrow. In fact, some of the most "practical" of our contemporary statesmen have persuaded themselves that tomorrow does not exist except in the imaginations of professorial "long-hairs." When plans for Poland, or Czechoslovakia, or Palestine, or military demobilization, or economic decontrol produce, within a few weeks, results which a sixth grade student could see coming with one eye shut, there is never an admission of short-sightedness. Instead we hear a plea for increased trust in the administration: according to the classical formula, the situation is extreme-

ly serious, therefore the people should not give play to their emotions (judgments of "right" and "wrong" being "emotions" in the gobbledygook of Washington bureaus), but should suspend judgment and support whatever measures the administration thinks needful.

In this atmosphere, pleas for justice to the tiniest of our minorities, who have at their command few votes in the marginal states, have fallen on deaf ears. The telling epithet "long-hairs" was ever on the lips of practical-minded cabinet officers when their advisers tried to remind them that justice to the native Indian population was an essential ingredient in any large-scale program of Alaskan development. One by one the advisers grew weary of the task of describing moral colors to the morally color-blind.

THE task of ethical criticism of the federal program of racial expropriation in Alaska soon passed by default from demoralized government circles to church groups interested in human rights. These could still see an injury to a small minority in a remote corner of our land as a threat to human dignity everywhere.

The *Christian Century's* article on the Tongass Act commented: "Congress has written one of the blackest pages in our history of Indian Affairs by passing the Alaskan expropriation bill. . . . The only hope the Alaska Indians have is that the Christian conscience of our country shall speak forcibly to secure remedial legislation at the next session of Congress." The liberal Catholic weekly, *Commonweal*, was equally critical: "Indians who have returned from the wars to find a scheme of racial expropriation depriving them of their livelihoods and their hopes for the future are profoundly disturbed. They observe grimly that in 1844 His Imperial Majesty, the Autocrat of All the Russias, ordered the officials of the Russian-American Company to 'obtain the consent of the natives' when they wished to acquire native lands or resources. Even the autocracy of the

Czars, the most absolute of its generation, was not as autocratic as the autocracy of modern materialism which excludes human values from bureaucratic balance sheets."

Former Interior Secretary Ickes, who knew the nature of the pressures that had been brought to put over the Tongass timber steal—having successfully resisted similar pressures for thirteen years himself—devoted two of his columns to the legislation, which he characterized as "an off-color bill to consummate a discreditable conspiracy . . . intended to plunder the Indians ruthlessly for private profit."

Other voices joined the protest. An editorial writer in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* declared: "The white man in Alaska despises the 'Siwash' (a distortion of the French word *sauvage*). A psychologist may find the root of that contempt in the involuntary guilt which men invariably feel when they profit at the expense of 'lesser breeds without the law.' Yet, neither the Interior Department, nor the presidentially appointed Governor of Alaska, both 'guardians' of the rights of the natives, protested against the shameless steal perpetrated by House Joint Resolution 205."

It remains to be seen whether these outcries will have any effect. Similar criticisms made within Washington officialdom before the program was launched raised hardly a ripple.

FLUSHED with success, the economic masters of Alaska have now inaugurated campaigns for new legislation to expropriate Indian lands and fisheries. The Alaska Salmon Trap Bill would take from Indians fishing sites worth millions of dollars and give them to the Alaska Salmon Industry Incorporated of Seattle and its affiliates. The Butler Bill to abolish reservations in Alaska would turn over Indian lands to the tender mercies of absentee mining companies. An Alaskan Indian summed up the situation: "First it was the Timber Wolves," he said. "Now it's the Fish Hawks. Next, I guess, will come the Gold Diggers."

The current assaults upon native possessions in Alaska are led by representatives of salmon packing companies, mining companies, and pulp syndicates. Each of these groups has good friends in the bureaus—the first two in the Department of the Interior (particularly in that Department's Fish and Wildlife Service), the last in the Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture, and all three in the Territorial Government of Alaska.

The task of drafting the various Indian expropriation measures and lobbying for them is jointly shared by industry lobbyists and federal and territorial officials. The registration record of one lobbyist shows that he received two hundred and fifty dollars a day for cooperating with Interior officials in drafting expropriation legislation. A few of the federal employees who have led the battle to extinguish Indian property rights have left government employment to take more attractive positions with the very industries they were supposed to regulate. Other federal employees in the forefront of the fight have found it possible to receive outside emoluments from the industries they are serving without ever abandoning their government connections.

At this writing, the outcome of the latest raids is uncertain. The Salmon Trap Bill seems to have been blocked, for the time being, by the protests of Indians, unions, and consumers. The Butler Bill to wipe out Alaskan reservations, after being amended to allow Indians space for burial but no space for earning a livelihood—again the theory that the only good Indian is a dead one—was sneaked through the Senate in the manner of the Tongass Bill, during the early morning hours of the last day of the last session, when opponents were off the floor. An effort to sneak the bill through the House was blocked, but will undoubtedly be renewed at the special session of Congress. The Indian Bureau will recommend a presidential veto if the bill is passed, but Senator Magnusson, along with some of Seattle's Timber Wolves,

Fish Hawks, and Gold Diggers, will visit the White House and try to get a Presidential signature on Alaska's Second Nuremberg Law.

IN Alaska the spirit of business enterprise is seemingly summed up in the words: "To him who hath shall be given, and from him who hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."

Colonialism in Alaska means that the people of that territory are not permitted to use its resources without paying absentee owners for the privilege. The Indian fisherman must pay eighty-five cents for a can of the salmon that he has just caught and sold for eight cents, and he must wait for the Alaska canned salmon to be shipped to Seattle, dressed up in labels, filtered through intermediaries, and shipped back to Alaska at the highest freight rate in America before he can enjoy the privilege of eating the produce of his labor. Colonialism further means that natives are arrested when they seek to cut their own trees or dig minerals on their own land. It means that people in Alaska, native or white, who work for a living and do not share in the profits of absentee owners are condemned to die of diseases traceable to malnutrition. The story of the Alaskan natives is graphically told in two sentences of a report in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* for October 25, 1947: "The school teacher at Barrow stated that of 30 children between the ages of 5 and 6 who had entered school but 6 lived to finish. The majority of deaths were due to tuberculosis."

Such are the human footnotes to a "favorable balance of trade" under which exports from Alaska for the thirty-five years before the war exceeded imports by 88 per cent, or 959 million dollars.

Who got the 959 million dollars? By and large it went to absentee owners who showed no interest in reinvesting their gains in Alaskan industry. Had these sums gone into local improvements and local industry, into the building of roads, schools,

hospitals, homes, sawmills, machine shops, and shipyards, Alaska might today be a thriving replica of modern Scandinavia. For Sweden, Norway, and Finland combined, lying in the same latitude as Alaska, enjoying approximately the same range of climatic conditions, and about the same mineral, agricultural, forest, and wildlife resources with a somewhat smaller area, maintain a population of 13 million or more on a high level of health, comfort, and civilization. Alaska, on the other hand, boasts a permanent population of between 70,000 and 90,000, half or nearly half of Indian, Eskimo, or Aleutian stock.

The fact that Alaska has less than one person for every six square miles does not prevent its absentee rulers and their faithful resident spokesmen in chambers of commerce and bar associations from raising storms of protest against all plans to encourage Alaskan settlement. The Lemke Bill to liberalize the homestead laws for the benefit of veterans, which passed the House unanimously last year, now appears to have been killed in the Senate, killed by the same combination of forces that put over the Tongass timber steal. The same interests, a few years ago, were screaming to high heaven against the Roosevelt-Ickes program of inviting would-be immigrants from Europe to come to unsettled areas of Alaska and there build a New Scandinavia under the American flag.

But the chambers of commerce make it clear in their promotion leaflets that they are not opposed to *all* immigrants. Any American citizen with \$5,000 in cash will be welcome, at least until his cash is gone—although immigrants with 25 million dollars are preferred. But American citizens with \$5,000 in free cash over and above all debts are, statistically, near the top of the economic ladder and not likely to emigrate to a frontier land.

IT is only fair to say that the economic overlords of Alaska are not motivated by race prejudice. They are merely reluctant to dilute their control of an incred-

ibly wealthy territory. To be sure, to protect their take they are not above whipping up racial propaganda against Indians or against refugees. They are also capable of pitching their propaganda to the key of conservation and the need to keep the forests and lands of Alaska out of Indian or veteran or refugee hands, an untouched reserve for future generations. But the nub of the matter is always the same: They have a grip on something that they don't want to let go.

Two presidents and two secretaries of the interior have challenged that grip, but Alaskan settlement is still the great fiasco of American history: the permanent population of Alaska today is just about what it was two centuries ago.

President Roosevelt and President Truman told their secretaries of the interior, not once but many times, that it was necessary to settle hundreds of thousands of pioneer families in Alaska. Secretary Ickes and Secretary Krug both wholeheartedly seconded the policy of Alaskan settlement. But at every point where the policy led to conflict with absentee owners of Alaskan resources, it was the national policy and the welfare of Alaska that went by the board. Somewhere down the line there was always a layer of government employees whose first allegiance was to the industries that now skim the Alaskan cream.

The key, for example, to Alaska's number one industry, the salmon industry, is control of the strategic fishing places. This key is held firmly in the hands of half a dozen large absentee-owned packing companies, who are allowed by the Department of the Interior to monopolize most of the strategic salmon trap sites of Alaska, notwithstanding a law of Congress prohibiting such private control of fishing areas. It took Secretary Ickes six years to fight his way through layer after layer of subordinates to get eleven salmon trap sites out of the hands of the Alaska Salmon Industry and its affiliates, and back into the hands of the local fishermen of three native fishing villages that had been using

or trying to use the sites from time immemorial. But within five months after Secretary Ickes left office, his temporarily defeated subordinates had reasserted themselves and the eleven traps were safely back in industry hands.

HISTORY shows that plunder, to be successful on a large scale, must be able to point to a high moral motivation, and, though it is difficult to see how the ruthless plundering of Alaskan natives (some of whom live within two miles of Soviet territory) can be said to contribute to the moral prestige of America in the world of today, the moral difficulty is not insuperable for men of ingenuity.

The most appealing justification for the plundering of Indians is in terms of national destiny. According to the common stereotype, the Indian, hopelessly wedded to an outworn culture, squats across the road of progress; considerations of the larger good require that he be shoved into the ditch.

This portrait has the virtue of simplicity, but it also has a grave defect: it completely distorts the facts.

The main argument for the Tongass Bill was the Department of Agriculture's assurance that it would bring immediate development of at least two, and probably more, twenty-five million dollar pulp mills in Alaska. The argument of the Indians' attorneys, that no bank would risk money on the strength of a law that was plainly unconstitutional, was brushed aside. But after the bill became law, four auctions of the expropriated timber lands were held—with no bidders.

The facts are that Indians in Alaska have made more progress in the development of their resources than white settlers, who are commonly content to live on canned goods from Seattle, and to dwell in houses of imported brick if they can afford to do so. Of the hundreds of white settlers who came to Alaska, only a handful have stayed and raised families. The vast majority entered with the object of getting

rich and getting out—and though few got rich almost all got out.

One has to go to an Indian reservation, like that on Annette Island, to find a community that has directed its energies to the development of its permanent resources, its fisheries, timber, and water power. It is on this reservation that one finds the only modern town in Alaska—perhaps in North America—without slums, unemployment, or taxes, where every family has a comfortable home with free electricity and running water. The native inhabitants of Annette Island have not had an opportunity to learn the meaning of unemployment in the midst of natural wealth. Even outside of the Annette Island Reserve, Indian-owned resources have for many years been utilized at a high rate, and with better conservation safeguards than natural resources on the public domain.

For that section of the public where some knowledge of the facts can be expected, an entirely different line of justification for the present raid on Alaskan native possessions is necessary. A few years ago, a dispute over land ownership between an Indian tribe and a railroad was decided in the lower courts in favor of the railroad, on the ground that the Spaniards, centuries ago, had wiped out the rights of the Indians. The decision was reversed by the United States Supreme Court, which pointed out that the Spaniards had done nothing of the sort, and that even if they had, the Indians were entitled to protection of their possessions under the law of the United States. But despite this vindication of Indian land claims in the Supreme Court, proponents of current Indian expropriation bills seek to justify their measures by asserting that many decades ago another sovereign, this time the Czar of Russia, connived with Secretary Seward to wipe out the rights of the Alaskan natives, although there is no historical evidence for any such assertion. The pattern of fleecing Indians and blaming the decision on our grandparents has many advan-

tages, not the least of which is that we can thus enjoy both the Indians' property and the white man's sense of moral superiority.

ALONG similar lines, a skillful manipulator can draw a tidy profit from the common feeling of guilt about our ancestors' treatment of the Indian. All that he needs to do is to transfer the public sense of shame to the decent things that our ancestors actually did in their dealings with Indian tribes, such as paying for lands that Indians were willing to sell, or allowing the Indians to reserve for their own use portions of their original domain.

The fact is that the acknowledged right of Indian tribes to reserve portions of their original domain for their own continued use, to draw a line and keep out the trespassing white settler or cattleman, was the one thing that made it possible for so many Indian tribes to regroup their forces, and to emerge, after a century or more of dealings with white civilization, not as a defeated and suppressed minority, but as a vigorous people, increasing more rapidly in numbers than any other racial group in the nation. To the Indian, his reservation is home, his "promised land," often the land about which his creation-myths and childhood legends cluster, and generally all that stands between him and the spiritual and physical destruction that most non-reservation tribes have undergone.

To the unthinking white man, however, a "reservation" is an unhappy residue of a process that is unpleasant to think about. The tactic of giving Indian property bad names, of calling his land a "reservation" in tones that one uses for "concentration camp," and then "freeing" or "emancipating" the Indian by taking away his reservation has today the blessing of every scoundrel who casts covetous eyes on Indian wealth. This semantic manoeuvre is being worked to its limit by the chambers of commerce in Alaska.

The distinguished head of the Senate Interior Affairs Committee, Senator Butler

of Nebraska, and the learned Governor of Alaska, Dr. Ernest H. Gruening, are both firmly convinced that allowing Alaskan natives to own substantial tracts of the land which they have used and occupied for centuries would make for "segregation." Of course, it would be just as logical to urge that the large landholdings of white men and white corporations in Alaska make for segregation, and that if white men were deprived of their possessions by act of Congress they would have to seek food and shelter from generous Indian and Eskimo villagers, thus ending the white man's "segregation" in Alaska.

But the opposition to "segregation" is not a matter of logic. It is a matter of deep-seated emotion. Even outside of backwoods America, there are many good people who are deeply pained when they visit Puerto Rico and hear American citizens talking Spanish or visit New York and hear Italian or Yiddish being spoken in the city streets. These same good people are equally disturbed when they learn of Indian villagers in Alaska who are not anxious to imitate the cultural habits of the white pioneers that they meet in the streets of Juneau or Fairbanks. To those who harbor such resentments, it seems almost a patriotic duty to wipe out centers of "alien" culture, whether the "menace" comes from 20th-century Mayflowers or from our original hundred per cent Americans.

HERE in America, the treatment of minorities has always been the best index of liberal civilization. Advances or inventions in our commerce, industry, science, or government begin as unorthodox ideas,

and have flourished on this soil because America was par excellence a land where men could differ from their neighbors and find tolerance. American prosperity, no less than American inventiveness and American freedom, are profoundly threatened by any upsurge of intolerance. And of all forms of intolerance that directed against a racial minority is the most terrible, because there is no escape from one's race. The victim of economic oppression may be buoyed up in the struggle for existence by the hope that he can improve his economic status; the worker may become an employer. The victim of religious oppression can, as a last resource, embrace the religion of his oppressors. The victim of racial persecution cannot change his ancestors. For these victims there is no sanctuary and no escape.

And yet, terrible as is the fact of racial oppression to an oppressed minority, it is, in the long run, more terrible to the dominant society of the oppressor. For the fact remains that while racial intolerance has seldom destroyed its intended victim, it has almost always, in the end, destroyed the society in which it flourished.

That is why our treatment of our oldest racial minority in America has an importance that is not to be measured by the number of Indians who are mistreated. A democracy entrusts the task of maintaining its most precious liberties to those who are despised by their fellow men. The gallant fight that Alaskan natives are waging today for the defense of their rights is a fight against racist principles that threaten all Americans. For the rights of each of us in a democracy can be no stronger than the rights of our weakest minority.

GOD, JOB, AND EVIL

The Eternal Tension Between Man and God

PAUL WEISS

GREAT literature is a universe framed in words. Offering a scheme of things more dramatic, more intelligible, more beautiful, more self-revealing than the universe in which we live, it at once inspires, restrains, and enriches the wise man, providing him with an endless source and a satisfying measure of spiritual growth.

The book of Job is surely one of the very great works of literature of the world. It touches the core of existence; it probes to the root of the problem of good and evil, the destiny of man, the meaning of friendship, the wisdom and goodness of God, and the justification of suffering.

We may call ourselves atheists. We may swear by the latest anthropological pronouncements that all values are relative except those which make anthropologists respectable. We may claim to have no use for anything other than the discoveries or rules of economics, history, politics, music, or physics. This will in no way prevent us from being radically informed and perhaps transformed by the book of Job. That book depends for its power on no prior commitment to any particular religion—or to religion at all.

With this article, PAUL WEISS continues the analysis of basic religious issues in the light of modern thought that he began with his "The True, the Good, and the Jew" [COMMENTARY, October 1946]. Professor Weiss, one of the foremost practicing philosophers in this country, was born in New York City in 1901, was graduated from the College of the City of New York, and received his doctorate at Harvard. He is professor of philosophy at Yale and was formerly chairman of the department of philosophy at Bryn Mawr. Among his books are *Reality* (1938) and *Nature and Man* (1946).

The problem it deals with is unconfined within any limited doctrine, philosophy, or creed. We must try to read it with the kind of sympathetic objectivity and resolute courage we normally reserve for our favorite modern writers—a Dostoevsky or a Freud, a Blake or a Kierkegaard—but then I think we will find in it much to despise as well as much to admire.

Though written in a magnificent style and sustaining brilliant insights, the book of Job is not a pleasant tale. It is not reasonable, and it violates our sense of what is right and wrong. Its value lies primarily in that it forces to the fore the mystery of human existence, where the righteous sometimes suffer and the evil apparently prosper mightily.*

To get the most out of the book of Job it is desirable, I think, to state the story in such a way as to stress traditionally neglected features. One will then be able to look in a fresh way at the perennial problem of evil, and perhaps even to make a little progress in grasping what existence means to man.

* The reader may be interested in any one of three books recently published. One, *The Commentary of Levi Ben Gerson, on the Book of Job*, translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Notes by Abraham L. Lassen (New York, Bloch, 1946), is primarily of historic interest. Another, *The Book of Job*, translated from a critically revised Hebrew text with commentary by Reverend Edward J. Kissane (New York, Sheed and Ward, 1946), is a good, original, scholarly work. Less scholarly, since it leaves out alternative readings, clips its comments, and dispenses with critical philological notes, but much more alive and much more worth reading is Rabbi Dr. Victor E. Reichert's *Job*, with Hebrew text and English translation (Hindhead, Surrey, The Soncino Press, 1946). This edition prints, at the top of the page, the received Hebrew text parallel to the sensitive translation of the Jewish Publication Society of America, reserving the rest of the page for Rabbi Reichert's comments. It is this edition I refer to here.

II

IN OUTLINE the story is rather simple. A childishly conceived God, a childlike God in fact, boasts about Job to his angel Satan as a child might about a dog. Satan shrewdly observes that men well cushioned against the world of tragedy and disease, poverty and contempt, have no great temptation to abuse the source of their goods. God is provoked by this sensible remark. He sets himself to prove that Job will stand firm though he lose all that is precious. God does not want to show that Job will stand firm in goodness, virtue, or decency. All that he wants to show is that if Job is cut off from the fat of existence he will not blaspheme in the face of God.

God, from a strictly legalistic point of view, is shown in the end to be right and Satan to be wrong. Job does not blaspheme in God's face. But of course no one could possibly do this, for that would be at one and the same time to see God and not to see him, to know him and not to know him, to face him and to turn away. But if it is simple blasphemy that is in point, there is no doubt but that God lost and Satan won, for Job blasphemed again and again, sincerely, roundly, and wholeheartedly.

What shocks us and should shock us is not Job's blasphemies, but God's. With a callousness, with a brutality, with a violence hard to equal in any literature, secular or divine, God, just to make a petulant point, proceeds to do almost everything the most villainous of beings could want. Not only does he kill, in one fell swoop, without excuse, explanation, or warrant, all of Job's cattle, but he follows this up by killing all Job's servants and then all his sons and daughters.

The inhumanity of the author (or of his God, if one prefers) has been almost matched by the insensitivity of those commentators who accept the Prologue to the book of Job and do not feel a need to underscore an abhorrence of God's project and performance. Putting aside the question of whether Job's health and happiness are justifiably

jeopardized because Satan is unconvinced by God's boasts, and ignoring the rights of cattle to live, there is the fact that the servants, if not the sons and daughters of Job, are human beings as vital, as precious, as worthy of life, dignity, and a defense against Satan as Job himself.

The author of the book of Job thought of Job as a pawn between God and Satan. But less than Job, infinitely less, was the value he set on Job's servants and children. He thought of them as rightfully used and even abused just to make Job uncomfortable, to try his faith, to confound Satan.

It is really amazing that Job should find, not the death of his servants or of his children, but that of his body cells, the most trying of experiences. Our modern torturers know better. They know that the core of a decent man can be more readily and vitally touched by killing his dependents than by making him sick or wracking him with pain.

Three friends come to comfort Job. He entertains them with a long lament and a set of curses calculated to make the heart curl. To this they reply with little human sympathy. They are friends of an eternal law, not of a suffering spirit. Still, it is with considerable justice and good solid traditional wisdom that they observe that Job is not as pure as he thinks he is. His sufferings, they insist, are undoubtedly deserved.

In the Epilogue, God reproves the three friends, apparently for believing that human suffering comes from God and that it is bestowed on those who do wrong. If the reproof is just, we should tremble for the souls of those who assure us that God is on the side of what we have learned is the right. The refusal to affirm that good men are the nurslings of God, to be fittingly rewarded before their days are done, is today often called a lack of faith in religion. Actually, it is one of the characteristics of God as he appears in the book of Job.

Job is not a pleasant person, rich or poor, in health or in sickness, with children or without. His answer to his friends was that he was at least as good as any—which he

undoubtedly was, except for saying so. He insists, a little too violently, that there is no wickedness in his heart and that his conduct is above reproach. He suffers damnably because of the searing pain to which he is subjected. But he suffers also at least as much because he is overwhelmed with shame. He is in anguish because he is looked on with contempt by the children of those he despised. And even more than cure and peace, he wants to argue with God and make God show due cause. But whatever his faults, his sufferings were real. And his question, whether taken to refer to him alone, to someone else, or to an indefinite number of men, demands an answer: Why should a good man suffer?

After an interlude in which Elihu, a brash youngster, repeats in principle what his elders said, God comes out of a whirlwind and confronts them all. He answers that he is omnipotent and therefore evidently possessed of a wisdom no man can rightly measure or rightly judge, a proposition that will not withstand logical scrutiny, and so far as it does, cannot please those who think of God as having the same ideas of goodness and justice as man. The story ends with God reproving the friends (without making clear the exact nature of their fault), and with an inadequate attempt by God to make amends to Job by making him wealthy and respected once again, and by endowing him with a new set of children.

The book of Job does not explicitly answer the question it so unmistakably asks. Instead, it forces one to try to answer the question oneself and therefore to re-examine what one had previously believed about God and man, and the nature of good and evil.

III

THERE are at least ten different kinds of evil, though philosophers have been inclined to mention only three. Since there are no well-turned designations and definitions for most of them, we must make up a set as we go along. With some warrant in tradition, we can perhaps designate the different kinds of evil as *sin*, *bad intention*,

wickedness, *guilt*, *vice*, *physical suffering*, *psychological suffering*, *social suffering*, *natural evil*, and *metaphysical evil*.

The most characteristically human evils are the first two, for they are privately inflicted. Of these, the more radical is the religious, what we normally speak of as *sin*. It can be defined in such a way as to be applicable both to those who, like the followers of Confucius and Marx, are without a God, and to those who, like Job, firmly believe in one. He sins who is disloyal to a primary value accepted on faith. Blasphemy is one form of sin and treason another, treason being in fact but practical blasphemy in the realm of the state. These and other forms of sin but begin a process of alienation from the land of consistent living and almost always end in a deserved spiritual and sometimes physical death.

All men take some supreme value to serve as the pivot and justification of the things they think and do. It is one which they have not rationally justified and can perhaps not rationally defend. On the contrary, it is usually what is needed in order to justify their use of reason and their activities. When they go counter to it, they go counter to themselves. He sins who denies his people, just as surely as does he who violates the fiat of his God.

The book of Job affirms—I think correctly—that it is not necessary for a man to sin.

I have not gone back from the commandment of His lips;

I have treasured up the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.

Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.

Job was a righteous man, a man who lived up to the demands of his God, who feared God and shunned evil, who was *tam*, perfect, without blemish. This God affirms as well as Job. It never is denied.

Over against the theologians' belief that no mortal since the days of Adam can be without sin, is the testimony of the book of Job. It is not necessary that a man sin. But

though we do not have to sin, all of us do. We are faithless again and again to the things we most cherish and which give our lives meaning and unity. The only thing "original" or unavoidable about sin is that each man sins in his own way.

Job is not a sinner. Since he suffers, suffering and the multiple evils of the world ought not to be attributed to man's failure to avoid sin. It is foolish to hope that a perfect world could be achieved if only men were true to God, the state, or science. He who claims that the solution of the problems left behind by the atomic bomb depends on man's willingness to subscribe to a single or triune God, to democracy or federalism, to physics or pragmatism, goes counter to the insights of the book of Job.

IV

AN APPARENT hair's breadth from sin and yet a world away is *bad intent*, ethical evil, the setting oneself to break an ethical command. Like sin, this is privately achieved. It is a matter of the inward parts. Unlike sin, it has a this-worldly reference always, and is concerned with the good as open to reason. The man of bad intent fails internally to live up to what reason commends.

He who wants to cheat the orphan and the widow, who steals, lies, kills, is one who violates what reason endorses as right. He who is not religious does not necessarily find these prospects more delightful than does he who is. A religious man may in fact at times be more unethical than an irreligious one, for a religion may demand of its adherents that, on behalf of it, they defy their reason and destroy the lives, property, and prospects of others.

The history of religion is in good part a story of the improvement of the morals of the gods. Throughout the ages we have edited supposed divine words to make them conform to what we know to be ethically correct. He who would avoid all ethical evil must not cling too close to the practices and faith of his fathers.

It is conceivable that a man might be

without evil intent, though it is hard to believe that there ever was a man so insensitive that he never was tempted by the smell of novelty, a challenge to his daring, or the promptings of his conceit and flesh, to think pleasantly of what his reason tells him is wrong.

Evil intent and suffering do not necessarily go together. There are those who intend to do good to others and those who intend to be good to themselves. Often it is the former who get the grit while the latter enjoy the grain. And Job affirms that there is no after-life in which the balance will be righted.

*As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away,
So he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.*

The brutal fact of the matter is that God's good is not identical with what we take to be ethically good. This is evident occasionally to Job:

*Though I be righteous, mine own mouth shall condemn me;
Though I be innocent, He shall prove me perverse.*

But it is also affirmed by God. Despite Elihu's claim that

*The Almighty, whom we cannot find out, is excellent in power,
Yet to judgment and plenteous justice He doeth no violence.*

God cries to Job out of the whirlwind:

*Wilt thou even make void My judgment
Wilt thou condemn Me that thou mayest be justified?*

If the book of Job be any guide, we must oppose those contemporary prophets who affirm that God's wisdom is ours, and that what we take to be good, God will eventually endorse.

V

EVERY man has evil intentions, if only for passing moments. Fortunately for our

society and civilization, most of us do not allow such intentions to pass the threshold of the mind and be expressed in practice. Privately and occasionally unethical in intent, we publicly and regularly do much that is good. Though we may not escape the first and second forms of evil, most of us avoid the third, *wickedness*, the evil of carrying out evil intentions.

Job who was a little too sure that he was righteous and well-intentioned, was quite right in insisting that he was not wicked.

*I put on righteousness, and it clothed
itself with me;
My justice was a robe and a diadem.
I was eyes to the blind,
And feet was I to the lame.*

Those who are wicked are the enemies of mankind. Yet they seem to prosper. Why should this be so?

*Wherefore do the wicked live,
Become old, yea, wax mighty in power?
Their seed is established in their sight
with them,
And their offspring before their eyes.
Their houses are safe, without fear,
Neither is the rod of God upon them.
They send forth their little ones like a
flock,
And their children dance.
They sing to the timbrel and harp,
And rejoice at the sound of the pipe.
They spend their days in prosperity,
And peacefully they go down to the
grave.*

Philosophers such as Gersonides and Maimonides thought the answer was to be found in the theory that God's providential care did not extend to individuals. They held that men prospered or suffered as the outcome of natural laws, and regardless of whether or not they conformed to a religious or ethical demand. But their theory does not cover the issue. Putting aside the fact that the story of Job had God and Satan actually interfering with the lives and fortunes of individual men, there is the fact that the participants have no doubt but that God

could apportion health, wealth, children, and reputation in any way he wished. To the question, why is it that God did not reward the good and punish the bad, the answer given in the book of Job is that God has his own business, that he does not use our standards, that he has his own reasons, that his idea of the good is beyond the reach of man's knowledge.

The philosophers and the Bible are not, however, altogether opposed. It is possible to hold that God does not interfere with the detailed workings of the world and that he has his own standards of what ought to be and what ought to be done. The philosophers, I think, are right in affirming that God does not—in fact, cannot—interfere with the ways of the world. But the author of the book of Job is right in thinking that God does not allow man's standard of true virtue, right action, and real justice to dictate to him what he is to do. With scathing scorn God asks Job:

*Knowest thou the ordinances of the
heavens?
Can'st thou establish the dominion there-
of in the earth?
Doth the hawk soar by thy wisdom?*

He who is wicked does not necessarily incur the wrath of God. Nor does he necessarily suffer. If a man ought to avoid wickedness, the reason cannot be that he would thereby escape either the anger of God or natural ills. We do not know what God will be angry about and whether, if he were, he could or would do anything to those who aroused him.

A man ought to avoid wickedness because otherwise he stands in his own light. It is of his nature to need his fellows and to be obligated to preserve and enhance the good that is theirs. He who is wicked opposes himself, since he does what the very completeness of his nature requires that he should not do. He may gain the whole world, but since he thereby loses himself, it cannot be himself whom he profits.

It is not true that the wicked prosper. They may be at their ease, they may have

pleasure, property, admiration, honor, security. They may be unconscious of any wrong. Everyone may account them happy. Yet it would be wrong to say that they really prosper, since they defeat themselves, forcing themselves as they do further and further away from the status of a complete man.

VI

THE wicked never really prosper. But do not the good suffer? And if they do, can the suffering be justified?

The answer to this question requires, I think, some grasp of the fourth form of evil, *guilt*.

A man ought to intend to do the good and ought to avoid injuring others. But he ought also not neglect the plight of any. Every single being deserves to be helped, cherished, loved. Yet he who concentrates on one here must slight others there. Each has only finite energy, finite funds, finite interest; none can be everywhere. Each thus fails to fulfill an obligation to realize the good completely. Not necessarily wicked, each is necessarily guilty, humanly evil, one who fails to do all that ought to be done.

Eliphaz correctly charges Job with a neglect of hosts of needy:

*Thou hast not given water to the weary
to drink,
And thou hast withholden bread from
the hungry.*

He spoils the charge by supposing that Job deliberately neglected the needy. To be sure, so long as he had a shekel and another did not, Job was chargeable as selfish, as having a narrow vision, as being unwilling to extend himself. But since his actions were not rooted in a deliberate malicious intent, he could not be rightly said to be wicked. He was, however, guilty.

Even if Job gave up all that he owned, he would still be guilty. He would be guilty of failing to fulfill an infinite obligation to do good to every being everywhere. Just as no man can claim that his poverty frees him from a duty to repay a loan, so no one can claim to be without guilt because unable to

fulfill this infinite obligation. Job, even if he had given up all his possessions, which he was far from doing, would still have been infinitely guilty of neglecting the needs of most of mankind.

A guilty man deserves to be punished. Were there a God and were he just, did he measure punishment according to human standards of right and wrong, everyone would be subject to infinite punishment. Anything less than this would be an undeserved bounty, warranting paeans of thanks to any God that there might be. It is some such view as this, I think, which is characteristic of much of Jewish thought. Job, in his belief that he deserved to prosper, goes counter to the dark, somber, and reasonable temper of most Jews to the effect that men deserve nought but punishment. Every reward for the Jew is an unwarranted blessing, a sign of the infinite mercy of a just God.

Job deserved punishment. He was in fact a guilty man who was made to suffer less than he ought. Zophar rightly says to him:

*Know therefore that God exacteth of
thee less than thine iniquity de-
serveth.*

But what Zophar did not say or see is that Job is no more guilty than anyone else, that his suffering was no evidence of his being more wicked, of his having unethical thoughts, or of his being irreligious. And what none of them sees or says is that the point could be made without referring to God at all. Despite our guilt, we have the good fortune to live in a universe where only some of us suffer and then only part of the time.

A fifth form of evil is *vice*, the habit of doing what injures others. This, though it looms large in the writings of ethicists and is of great interest to educators and lawmakers, is not dealt with in the book of Job. We must therefore regretfully pass it by, but not before we remark that it is produced by men and not by God, that it is independent of intent, and that it need not entail suffering.

VII

THE sixth, seventh, and eighth forms of evil can be dealt with together as different modes of suffering. Men suffer in their bodies, *physically*; in their minds, *psychologically*, and as both together, *socially*. Job suffered in all three ways. To his physical suffering:

*My flesh is clothed with worms and
clods of dust;*

*My skin closeth up and breaketh out
afresh.*

*In the night my bones are pierced and
fall from me,*

And my sinews take no rest.

is added a psychological suffering:

*When I say: "My bed shall comfort me,
My couch shall ease my complaint";*

*Then Thou scarest me with dreams,
And terrifiest me through visions,*

*So that my soul chooseth strangling,
And death rather than these my bones.*

and this is capped with a social suffering:

*He hath stripped me of my glory,
And taken the crown from my head.*

*He hath put my brethren far from me.
And mine acquaintance are wholly es-
tranged from me.*

*My breath is abhorred by my wife,
And I am loathsome to the children of
my tribe.*

Even urchins despise me.

Torn in his body, by his mind, and from his fellow man, Job has no place to rest. In him evil has found a lodging; there it festers and grows. His sufferings are real, painfully real, or everything we could possibly know is nought but an illusion.

Those philosophers who assure us that such sufferings are like ugly spots in paintings, which disappear when seen as part of the beautiful whole they make possible, overlook a slight point: it is a living man who suffers.

The suffering may seem like nothing from

the perspective of the world. But it is all the world to him who suffers. It is real, it is vital, it is ultimate; it must be reckoned with. As the story of Job makes abundantly clear, it has nothing necessarily to do with other forms of evil. It is to be conquered, not by improving our morals, but by improving our bodies, our minds, and our societies.

Good men will undoubtedly help us advance in medicine, psychology, and politics more than those who are bad. But it will not be because they are religiously or ethically good that they will make progress in these fields, but because they are good as doctors, psychologists, and sociologists.

It is not necessary that men should suffer. Some remain healthy throughout their days, others are perpetually at peace with themselves, and still others are perfectly at home with their fellows. It is hard to see why any one man might not enjoy all three types of good. In any case, it is one of the tasks of all to make this true of each.

VIII

BEYOND these evils, usually neglected in this anthropocentric age, is a ninth, a *natural* evil, an evil embodied in the wild, destructive forces of nature. Cataclysms of all kinds, earthquakes, tidal waves, and hurricanes, "the leviathan and the behemoth," are forces of destruction which

esteemeth iron as straw

And brass as rotten wood.

They ought not to be. They do not arise, however, because there is something bad in man. The wind does not blow violently, the earth does not rock, because men sin or kill. To suppose that nature is geared to the goodness and badness of men is to suppose either a mysterious harmony between ethics and physics, or that spirits can really move mountains.

It is God, according to the book of Job, who is responsible for the forces of nature.

Out of whose womb came the ice?

*And the hoar-frost of heaven, who hath
gendered it?*

It is God

*Who hath cleft a channel for the water-
flood*

*Or a way for the lightning of the
thunder,*

*To cause it to rain on a land where no
man is.*

But then, either God is responsible for natural evils, or he has his own mysterious reasons for allowing what he does, or the universe and its evils are independent of him. The first of these alternatives is untenable. If God is responsible for the occurrence of evils, it must be because he is not good and therefore not God. We must take one or both of the remaining alternatives, unpalatable though they are to the traditionally minded. The former says that God is not necessarily on the side of what men term the right, while the latter says that God does not interfere with the workings of the universe. As we saw earlier in discussing wickedness, these two are compatible: men and God may not only have different standards of goodness but may be quite independent in nature.

God has his own standards of goodness and does not disturb the natural order of things. If "providence" be understood to refer to an irresistible divine force supporting what men take to be good, there is then no providence. But God could offer material which the universe might utilize in its own way, and God could preserve whatever goods the universe throws up on the shores of time. If he did, he would exhibit a providential concern for the universe and its inhabitants, but one which does not conflict with the brutal fact that there are both human and natural evils.

IX

NO ONE of the foregoing nine forms of evil is necessary. It is conceivable that none

of them might be. To be sure, wherever there are men, there is the evil of guilt, but men need not exist. To be sure, if we have a universe of interplaying things, there will be destructive natural forces, but the universe might conceivably reach a stage of equilibrium. Each atom might vibrate in place and interfere with nothing beyond. What could not be avoided by the things in any universe whatsoever is the tenth kind of evil, *metaphysical* evil, the evil of being one among many, of possessing only a fragment of reality, of lacking the reality and thus the power and good possessed by all the others.

Any universe whatsoever, created or uncreated, is one in which each part is less than perfect precisely because it is other than the rest, and is deprived therefore of the reality the rest contain. God might have made, could he make anything at all, a better universe than this, for he could have eliminated or muted some of the forms of evil that now prevail. But he could not have made this universe in detail or as a whole completely free of all defect. No matter how good and concerned God might be, and no matter how few of the other nine types of evil happen to exist, there is always metaphysical evil to mark the fact that the universe is not God and God not the universe.

X

MUCH of the foregoing can be summarized in four questions and answers:

Why do bad men prosper? They do not.

Why does God not make bad men suffer more than they do? He does not interfere with the workings of the universe on the whole or in detail.

Why do good men suffer? Suffering and goodness have quite dissimilar causes.

Is God on the side of the right? God has his own standards. But to be religious is to have a faith that his standards will eventually be ours.

HABIMAH IN NEW YORK

A Great Theater Enters a New Period

HEINZ POLITZER

SINCE their arrival in Palestine in 1928, the Habimah Players have functioned as "State Theater," though at that time the Jewish state was a vision rather than a reality. From the very beginning, Habimah (which means "stage" in Hebrew) was part of the nation's cultural core, growing into a national institution whose popularity and ubiquity—in city, town, and village—was in later years matched only by the Palestine Orchestra. Habimah's permanent building in Tel Aviv was opened, while still unfinished, in 1945. (At one time it had been planned to build a whole artists' quarter around it to serve as the geographical focus of Hebrew culture.)

Now, for the first time since settling in Palestine, Habimah has returned to the United States (May 1 to June 10 in New York) in the very hour that the state it represents is struggling to secure its existence.

Dedicated to representing and preserving tradition, Habimah has left experiment

PROBABLY no theatrical group of our times has had so exciting and intimate a relationship with the cultures of Europe and Palestine as the famous Habimah players. Their recent season in New York, during which they presented four plays from their repertory, evoked widespread comment. Unhappily, the quality of the comment suffered somewhat from the fact that the drama critics for the most part did not understand Hebrew. HEINZ POLITZER, who has written criticism of distinction on art, the drama, and literature, has for his present article the additional qualification of a long acquaintance with Habimah's work gained during a ten-year residence in Palestine. Dr. Politzer, a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY, is at present on the staff of the Manumit School in Bristol, Pennsylvania. He was born in Vienna in 1910.

to other theatrical companies. The Ohel ("tent") group has developed an advanced popular style; its performance of Hasek's *Good Soldier Schweik* was, to my knowledge, equalled only by the performance of a Czech ensemble in E. F. Burian's *Divadlo* 37 in Prague. The Matate ("broomstick") group has specialized in suburban burlesques and satires of Palestinian everyday life that carry distinct overtones of official policy. In recent years, Josef Pacovski's Chamber Theater has ventured to perform lesser-known examples of world and avant-garde literature. Though the Habimah players have tried their hands time and again at modern and even at topical plays, they still remain more or less aloof from current trends, possessed as they are with a vision of traditional national culture that has not changed since the days immediately after the Russian Revolution when the company was born.

Among the ways in which Habimah has asserted tradition is language. It has succeeded in setting the standard for spoken Hebrew in Palestine. In view of the fact that Hebrew has had to defend itself against every new wave of immigrants, the linguistic task of Habimah was that of a guardian as well as guide to the melodic beauties and rich intricacies of the national tongue. Habimah's recitation is flawless and at the same time highly expressive, and though it *celebrates* rather than *speaks* a living idiom, it has transformed Sephardic pronunciation into the mature instrument of a kind of secular ritual.

Stylistically, the Habimah players have remained the Russian troupe they were when, in 1922, they performed their first full-length play in Moscow. Continuing in the late 20's and early 30's in Palestine to

depend on audiences composed predominantly of East European immigrants, they seemingly had every reason to adhere to their original stylistic orientation. However, there was always the risk of remaining a Hebrew theater of Russian actors in Palestine, instead of integrating themselves in the Palestinian scene in such a way as to fulfill the demands placed upon them by the institutional status which they had officially acquired.

After 1933 a veritable wealth of Western and Central European theatrical talent became available; but Habimah failed to assimilate so much as a single actor or producer hailing from those regions. It invited Erwin Piscator to serve as guest director for a performance of Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*, but would not change its style under his command. The only lasting concession made to this particular new wave of immigrants was to engage Max Brod as dramaturgist; he used his influence and diplomacy to broaden the repertory, if not the composition, of the troupe. Meanwhile public opinion continued to accept Habimah's rigidly preserved style—which is as Slavic and as romantic as the melody of "Hatikvah"—as the legitimate expression of the cultural aspirations of Jewish Palestine.

THE Habimah style might be described as mystic expressionism. S. Ansky's *Dybbuk*, first performed in 1922 and kept alive since then, laid down a line never to be abandoned. And it was the *Dybbuk* that opened Habimah's latest run on Broadway.

The settings—somewhat brushed up and simplified—still show that blend of folk life and symbolism which seems to stem from certain Chagall paintings. The perspective is arbitrarily—and often charmingly—distorted. Straight lines are virtually banned; curves and sloping surfaces prevail in benches, tables, and chairs. Hebrew letters dangle from the ceiling. Lighting effects are used with the logic of a fairy tale, and one expects at any moment to see Marc Chagall's rabbi fly over the roof with a fiddle in his hand.

The rest is movement. The music of I. Engel's sentimental and bathetic score dominates the scene. Dances follow the highly stylized, violent, and gravity-defying recipe of the expressionist ballet. Costumes, make-up, the grouping of individuals and of the ensemble recall the nightmarish rites of a savage tribe rather than the pious vitality of historic Hasidism. Humor, naturally, falls flat, especially in the scene of Leah's self-conscious bridegroom. A ghost story set in the midst of the community life of the *shtetl* has been burdened with the high-pitched accents of primitive tragedy. The effect today is just as contradictory, bewildering, and fascinating as it was a quarter of a century ago.

EUGENE VACHTANGOFF, Stanislavsky's pupil, staged *Dybbuk*. Another outsider, the British director Tyrone Guthrie, has directed one of the latest plays to be added to Habimah's repertory, Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*. Mr. Guthrie concentrates on the choruses of the Greek tragedy and molds them into speech and color units of diversified identity. The settings by Sebba, an abstract painter from Tel Aviv, contribute further to shifting the emphasis from the protagonists to the choral scenes, and from the action itself to its lyrical background. Thus the plight of the Theban populace becomes more important than the fate of Oedipus and his house. The ensemble character of the troupe, its predilection for the macabre and the visionary, were fully exploited in a performance whose mass scenes harvested whatever seeds Vachtangoff might once have sown.

On the other hand the principal actors of *Oedipus Rex* tend to move as if in a vacuum. Trained to exaggerated and accelerated gestures, they are at a loss in the long-drawn interplays of the Greek dialogue (the play itself was beautifully translated by the late Saul Tschernichowsky, the Hellenist and hedonist of modern Hebrew poets). The Habimah players find it hard to stand still and rest and listen. As usual, their speech is a feast of melody, of the phrasing and blending of phrases, yet the

acting itself is insecure, incoherent, and betrays an unfortunate taste for the operatic. The Habimah actors have lost the naïve command of their bodies. Continued stylization has deprived them of the grace and spontaneous poise upon which a genuine actor is supposed to base his art. They are two-dimensional players who attempt to make up with spiritual fervor for what they lack in physical plasticity.

THE fresco character of Habimah style is further borne out by the company's performance of Calderón de la Barca's *David's Crown*, where we faced the essence, nay, almost the caricature, of their artistic creed. A biblical theme—Amnon's incestuous love of his sister, Tamar, and Absalom's revolt against his father, David—is offered as a pageant of national history. Stripped of the Catholic and Baroque elements of the Spanish original, the plot takes on the finality and pale bareness of a skeleton and at the same time the rudeness of a fragment of Archaic Oriental sculpture. Sweetness and gentleness, which are the prime qualities of Calderón's speech, did not lend themselves to the Hebrew rendering. Between quotations from the Bible an abrupt and harsh dialogue intervenes that explains little and makes the understanding of the action possible only to those who happen to know the relevant Biblical passages by heart.

Yet there is the scene in which Absalom is surprised by David while playing with his father's crown—a Shakespearean climax veiled by the chiaroscuro of a great theatrical style. But the moment passes and is condemned to be forgotten by Absalom's feast, as provincial and pedestrian an interlude as any freshman's fancy could have imagined. The second finale, in which Absalom's body is carried through a lunar landscape of misery and complaint to be laid at his father's feet, again has pathos, but it is the pathos of *Götterdaemmerung* rather than that of Old Testament monumentality.

The performance of *David's Crown* was as a whole colored by an aggressive self-re-

liance and sinister romanticism, a kind of brutalization of the national past that, in the final analysis, leads only to national self-glorification. The human element—David's last words, for example—was submerged in a display of antiquity for antiquity's sake. The past was offered as a value *per se*; a myth was presented as the essence of a national dignity transcending good and evil; it was the translation of a certain aspect of biblical ethics into the plain language of history. (But in his Joseph novels, Thomas Mann showed us the possibility of humanizing the bare mythical account by adorning it with legendary exegesis; so, long before him, did the Midrashim.)

The Golem, which reveals a quest for a simpler and more popular style, is the most obvious divergence from the line of the *Dybbuk*. Yet Habimah's performance adds up to a hodgepodge rather than a legitimate new blend of styles. Wavering between genre painting and high-pitched expressionism—especially in the scenes of mad Tanhum—it demonstrates more than anything else Habimah's dire need of a permanent and consistent director.

As a drama *Golem* belongs to the Yiddish rather than to the Hebrew orbit. The story of a rebot brought to life to protect a Jewish community is closely connected with Prague and its legendary Rabbi Loew, and was handed down by that famous thesaurus, the Prague *Sippurim*, whence Gustav Meyrinck took it and transformed it into a modernistic, half-poetical, half-grotesque mystery story. H. Leivick's dramatic version still preserves some remnants of the Old Austrian atmosphere, especially insofar as it resembles that strange composition of conflicting elements which once constituted the Viennese *Volksstück*. Pantomime—the Golem learns to walk and to talk—and farce—the Golem lusts after the rabbi's granddaughter—are intermingled with drama and even genuine tragedy. The Messiah comes down to earth and, accompanied by the prophet Elijah, asks the Jews to let him sleep in their hide-out. But Maharal, the Golem's master, denies him the rest and refuge lest he disturb

his own idea of salvation. Here, the Yiddish popular play comes very near to great world literature. A playwright like the 19th-century poet Friedrich Hebbel would have liked this scene; indeed, the end of one of Hebbel's own tragedies, *Herodes und Mariamne*, opens to similar eschatological aspects. In this peculiar climax *Golem* creates a dramatic situation in the grand style with valid theatrical symbols as it confronts divine providence with human foresight. Yet, although Habimah had accentuated the idea of redemption through most of the performance, it buries the precious scene under a display of communal lament.

The minor key of self-pity rather than of genuine grief to which the *Golem* was attuned might easily be explained as a facile escape from the basic contradiction in the performance—the divergence of language and plot, i.e., of Hebrew and Yiddish. All the tenderness, intimacy, and *Innerlichkeit*, and nearly all of the idiomatic qualities of the Yiddish original were lost, and this loss was only partly compensated for by the monumental grandeur inherent in Hebrew. But in the *Dybbuk*, another Yiddish play, Habimah could replace the idiomatic elements with choreography and was thus able to achieve a certain stylistic unity. This cleavage between, this double allegiance to, Hebrew and Yiddish culture, which is made so manifest in *The Golem*, was one of the crucial problems of that older generation in Palestine for which Habimah stands.

Taken as a whole, Habimah's repertory did not fully rise to the occasion offered by its run on Broadway. Apart from the *Oedipus*—which itself offers none too bright a vista of man's destiny—biblical and legendary Judaism were revived in their most extreme and grimmest aspects. Terror and persecution, frustration and mania filled the stage with a gruesome atmosphere of despair and forsakenness. Yet, when one considers the recent and current Jewish fate, what is there to wonder at?

UNLIKE Hollywood, Habimah prides itself on the absence of stars. Subsidized by

a circle of friends, it has built up a cooperative system working on lines similar to those along which the collective settlements are being run. No distinction is made between prominent actors and small fry; plays are selected and cast in company discussions; the custom of alternation in the major parts tends to diminish privileges as well as ambitions. But even when it comes to actors you cannot enforce equality. Habimah's performances still pivot on the troupe's outstanding actors: Aaron Meskin and Hanna Rovina.

Meskin is a bear-like giant with the clumsy tenderness that lies hidden in the movements of many a very tall man. His voice, a deep, sonorous bass, commands the full register of human passions. There is a childlike quality about Meskin, an innocent playfulness, but deep under the surface there is a real violence. Somehow, wherever Meskin is and whatever his guise, we sense about him the atmosphere of cheap wayside inns and great black forests, unheard-of feats of courage and infantile anxieties—the atmosphere itself of Gogol's weird and humorous stories. He is the Golem, a figure baked of clay, a ragged and inarticulate monster, an antediluvian relic rather than a product of Cabbalist cunning. He is a helplessly family-minded King David; as Creon in *Oedipus* he is a self-possessed tyrant not quite aware of the fabric of fate that he tries to brush aside like a spider's web. He is Rafael, the blind beggar in the *Dybbuk*, a nightmare out of Ensor or Brueghel, a friendly awkward ogre who joins in the sombre grotesquerie of the wedding dance. Rafael is a very minor part, yet on entering the stage in this role Meskin towers above the shadowy realm with all the fullness of presence of a full-blooded human being.

Hanna Rovina, Habimah's leading lady, plays young Leah in *Dybbuk* and Jocasta in *Oedipus*, and in *King David* she sings Tamar's song of love and anguish before Amnon. A very restrained actress, she handles her artistic means with perfect economy. Rovina is the only Habimah actor who allows psy-

chology to enter her performance; her climaxes are well prepared and logically executed. Her acting depends more on the expressiveness of her beautiful hands than on the range of her voice, which tends of late to sound a little husky. At her best she gives shape to a timeless, sovereign, and compassionate mother image, assembling the experiences of a million martyred women in one outburst of rage or in the slow downward movement of a nobly carved forehead.

Ianna Govinska alternates with Rovina in the part of Leah in *Dybbuk*. She is younger than Rovina and her passion, less outspoken and self-centered, makes her fatal obsession more plausible to the audience. Since every nuance of movement and speech in Habimah's rendition of the *Dybbuk* has been pinned down by precedent, Govinska has little opportunity to offer a vision of her own, yet she cannot altogether prevent her talent from breaking through the artificial fetters of tradition. At the end of the second act, when the Dybbuk's (and her deceased lover's) voice answers the unwelcome bridegroom with the words of the Song of Songs, her acting surpassed Rovina's.

A NEW generation of Habimah players is rising who may gradually rejuvenate the style, cast, and repertory of the company. Habimah has a studio for training actors in Tel Aviv, and the chances are good that eventually a Palestinian style will supplant the present attractive but problematic *mixtum compositum* of Hebrew and Russian elements.

When Habimah appeared in Germany, during one of their first tours of Europe, Martin Buber greeted and evaluated their performances by crying: "Turn to the world, Habimah!" His advice still holds good. They have achieved much but they continue to stand at a crossroads, they still offer well-preserved reminiscences of the unreal days of yore instead of heralding a Hebrew culture to come. By turning themselves to the world at large they might very well win that release from their own past which makes human groups as well as individuals adult and independent.

In a deeper sense than that of a politico-cultural mission, Habimah's visit to America was a well-timed venture. But it should not rest content with edifying its audiences—it should open their minds as well.

THE FIRST GLIMMER OF EXTERMINATION

Plate-Glass Pogrom—and Aftermath

MELVIN J. LASKY

SEVERAL days after the anti-Semitic *Kristallnacht* outburst of November 8, 1938, a high Nazi conference was called in Berlin. The object of the conference, which was led by Joseph Goebbels and Hermann Goering, was to reassess the position of the Jew in German society, and to draw the appropriate consequences from the riots and arson which signified the Third Reich's final break with the so-called "non-Aryan" elements.

It was Goebbels who began. The report in his hand indicated that 101 synagogues had been burned and 76 others demolished, and all in all some 7500 stores and businesses destroyed. These eyesores were to be

The Nazis left many a mystery behind them—history has still to fathom the motivations of that strange compound of savagery and sophistication, cold calculation and blind irrationality, bureaucratic routinization and sheer mad impulse, that was the Hitlerian mentality. For example—and this is perhaps the deepest enigma of all—just when (and for what "reason") did the ruling clique decide to exterminate the Jews? Some light on the birth of this awful policy—which by its suggestion of the influence of a relatively trivial factor (the irritating cost of plate-glass insurance) makes the fantastic even more fantastic—is afforded by this account drawn from a stenographic report, taken from Nazi files, of a meeting of Hitler's highest counselors. Piecing together relevant passages from the original documents into a consecutive narrative, MELVIN J. LASKY enables us to see foreshadowings of the crematoria of Birkenau. Mr. Lasky has been correspondent in Germany for the *New Leader* ever since the end of the war. Some months ago, his speech in defense of intellectual freedom at a Soviet-sponsored "cultural congress" was reported widely in the American press. Mr. Lasky was born in New York in 1920, and attended the College of the City of New York and the University of Michigan.

cleaned up. And of all the suggestions as to how to use the new open spaces, Goebbels favored his own—"more parking lots." The suggestion was accepted as a significant contribution to the solution of the *Lebensraum* problem. From this, Goebbels went on to the necessity of legally isolating the Jews in the German community.

"Jews will be forbidden to attend German theaters, cinemas, and circuses. I think that our current theatrical situation can stand it. The theaters are always filled up anyway. We just don't have any more space. . . . Jews should no longer be allowed to sit next to Germans. Maybe a little later one or two houses here in Berlin can be set aside for them where they can see Jewish movies. . . ."

The time had apparently come when the presence of Jews was "a provocation." The conference became alarmed at the possibility that a Jew and a German, under the present conditions, could be sharing the same sleeping-car accommodations. "Then give them a car of their own," said Goering. "But suppose," answered Goebbels, "there aren't too many Jews taking the D-train to Munich. Suppose there are only two Jews in the whole car, and all the other sections are filled up. Why then these Jews really have super-special accommodations!" Goering wasn't too upset: "Then we really don't need a special law—simply throw them out or let them sit out the trip in the toilet. . . ." For Goebbels, however, this only complicated the problem; for this would contradict the new law which forbade Jews to use German toilets, German baths, and German swimming-pools. "All right," said Goering. "We'll give them some of their own. . . ." This left, however, other difficulties unsolved. For the Jews, according to another Goeb-

bels clause, were to be forbidden to clutter up German woods and forests.

"All right, all right," said Goering finally. "We'll give them a special wooded section of their own. And Alpers here will see to it that the various animals who look damned like the Jews—elks, you know, have exactly the same kind of crooked nose—come there and settle down. . . ."

Goebbels pressed further. "But then there are Jews who don't look very Jewish!" "And they don't even say that they are Jews!" added Goering. This, clearly, constituted a special problem and a new danger. "Why, Jews like that can sit themselves down among German mothers and children and begin to louse the place up (*zu mosern und zu stänkern*)!" This issue was resolved with special benches for Jews, and special schools for Jewish children.

AND then the conference dropped this theme to take up what was apparently a far more urgent matter. Goering called in Herr Hilgard, chief representative of the German insurance companies.

"The problem is this," Goering began. "Through the justified anger of the people against the Jews a certain amount of damage has been caused in the country. Windows have been broken, property damaged, people hurt, synagogues burned, *und so weiter*. I suppose that some of the Jews, probably most of them, were completely covered by insurance. . . ." Hilgard said yes. "Then instead of hurting the Jews, the people in their justified reprisals simply caused damages which will be paid for by German insurance companies. . . ." But that obviously could be easily handled with a ruling which stopped all payments. "Still, the question that passionately interests me is what to do in case these German companies are covered by re-insurance with foreign guarantors. I wouldn't want to miss the chance to pick up some foreign exchange, which after all wouldn't go to the Jews but to the German economy. . . ."

Hilgard painfully clarified the situation. There was thorough coverage by insurance

—against fire, against theft, and against glass breakage. Nor were the damages of the *Kristallnacht* confined to Jews alone. The fire in the synagogues reached into neighboring Aryan buildings; much of the property in the Jewish stores was there only on a commission basis; and as for the glass, why in most cases the Jews were only tenants and the losses hit the landlords.

At this point Goering exploded. "What madness! We don't have any raw materials—it's all foreign glass—and that costs foreign exchange! It's enough to drive one crazy (*Man koennte die Waende hochgehen*)!"

The news was very bitter. Glass for stores like those along the Kurfuerstendamm came almost exclusively from Belgium. The total "Aryan damages" amounted to about six million marks (two million dollars), or about a half-year's production of the Belgian glass industry. That was the total loss in money and in time.

GOERING was hard hit. "We'll have to explain all that to the people!" But Goebbels sharply interrupted him. "That can't possibly be done at this time." "But it can't go on like this," argued Goering. "We simply won't be able to stand it! Impossible!"

Still there were angles to be explored. "What about burglary?" Goering asked. "When goods are dragged out of the store and burned on the street, is that also covered? . . . Wouldn't that be covered by riot? And there is scarcely any riot-coverage in modern insurance. . . ." But Hilgard would not confuse "theft" and "burglary" with "riot" and "tumult." "But this is really *riot*!" Goering insisted. "That's a legal concept! This is not a matter of *larceny* or of *house-breaking*. Right out in the open the masses rolled along and destroyed things. That's a *riot*! Or *tumult*!" Maybe tumult, Hilgard conceded, but not riot. "All right, then tumult. Does the insurance cover that?" But he was on the wrong track. "Take the case of Margraf on Unter den Linden. This, as one of Berlin's largest jewelry shops, had special police insurance. And the insurance covers every damage that could possibly take place.

The total loss reported to us amounts to 1.7 million, because the store was thoroughly plundered. . . ."

Goering exploded for a second time. "Daluge and Heydrich! You'll get me those jewels back by mass raids!" Daluge promised. The people would be constantly subjected to controls. Already one hundred and fifty arrests had been made. Goering felt a little better. "Otherwise the things will be got rid of. If some one comes along and says he bought the jewels, just take them ruthlessly away, and don't make a big fuss about it. . . ."

Heydrich complained that it would not be so easy. The jewels had been tossed out on to the streets and there they disappeared. The same had happened with the fur shops in the Friedrichstrasse. All the minks and skunks are gone. Kids stuffed themselves and took off. In the future, he suggested lamely, Hitler youth should always coordinate their activities with the Party. Daluge added that the police should snoop around for gossip in the neighborhoods—neighbors would always know if the woman next door had a new ring or fur coat.

This time it was Hilgard, national chief of the German insurance companies, who began to feel pained. He spoke sincerely about *unsere Haftpflicht*; their liability was a duty, a point of honor, and he asked to submit the petition of the insurance directorates. "We think it of profound importance, Herr Generalfeldmarschall, that no obstacles be placed in the way of the fulfillment of our contractual obligations. . . ." Answered Goering: "But that's what I must do, and I think that's of profound importance." Hilgard tried to explain. "It's a matter of our international business connections. Our foreign contacts are very important and profitable, and in the interests of Germany's favorable foreign-exchange balance it is vital that confidence in our insurance companies remain intact. If we today reject our legal commitments, our contractual obligations, that would be a black spot on the escutcheon of German insurance." "But not," countered Goering, "if

I passed a national statute to that effect. . . ."

Heydrich saved the situation. "Why not let the insurance companies shell out, but then at the pay-off simply confiscate all the cash? That way all the formalities are taken care of. . . ." Hilgard agreed, but wanted to make sure that the payment would be considered a legal and final transaction. "Just a moment!" interrupted Goering. "You'll have to shell out in any case, but where Jews are involved you'll have a legal prohibition, and the money will be handed over to the Minister of Finance. . . ." "Aha!" said Hilgard. But then came the insurance companies' suggestion: could not a certain percentage of that sum be returned to the companies to help cover the terrific damages? "Nein!" Goering shouted. "*Ich denke gar nicht daran!* The insurance companies are liable. No, the money belongs to the state, that's clear. No gifts for the insurance companies!"

Hilgard and the other insurance officials tried to make the extent of the financial catastrophe clear. The damages taken together would amount to more than twenty-five million marks. Heydrich added thoughtfully an estimate of how much taxes the state had lost.

GOERING began to feel very depressed. "*Mir waere lieber gewesen,*" he said, "I would have preferred that you beat up two hundred Jews and not destroy so much property and lose so much money (*solche Werte vernichten*). . . ."

Funk insisted on his solution: simply don't pay! But Hilgard thought it important that at least the formal gesture of payment be made.

"Well, gentlemen," Goering finally said, "it's clear as daylight. The insurance companies will pay for the damages. They want to pay for the damages. Fine. I can hardly believe that the costs would be too high. We have been assured that the insurance companies have been doing good business, and abroad too, so I'm sure the profits of the past will be sufficient to cover these losses. If the little companies get into difficulties,

why it would be a good thing if they went out of business anyway. As for the question of Jewish damages, the jewels from Margraf, and so on—here the state collects, minus such items as the police recover. As for the rest, the costs are marked over to the Jews; they'll pay. . . . And as for the foreign insurance companies involved, sure they must pay, and we'll confiscate that. . . ."

Hilgard apparently looked hurt, and Goering tried to cheer him up. "Look! The Jews suffered the damages and they're insured; they get the payments but we confiscate them. The end result is a profit for the insurance companies because for a part of the damages they don't have to pay. Herr Hilgard, you ought to be grinning!" Hilgard couldn't see it. How could non-payment of damages be called a profit?

Goering was patient. "If you please!" he began again. "You have to pay five million, see, and then all of a sudden along comes an angel in my rather corpulent form and tells you: a million of that you can keep. *Zum Donnerwetter noch einmal*, is that no profit?" And here Goering tried to make two rather badly phrased Jewish jokes about how rich Hilgard was. "I ought to get out and arrange a *chuppe* with you, or however one says it. . . ." "Anyway," he told him, "you're grinning all over. You made a nice little *rebbes* [sic]. . . ."

Hilgard was cold and unconvinced. "It is

for me a self-evident thing that the honorable German businessman should not be the sufferer in this situation. I have promised that Aryans would not be saddled with the huge losses. But that is precisely where the losses now lie, because it is the insurance community which has been hit—premiums grow higher, dividends lower. Here is where the losses really rest. . . ."

"If that happens to be the case," said Field-Marshal Hermann Goering in his unforgettable conclusion, "*then take some trouble next time and see to it that not so much window-glass gets smashed up! You also belong to the people. Send your representatives out into the streets! Let them spread enlightenment!*"

There were no more questions or problems.

The conference was over. Goebbels had added up the political balance of the *Kristallnacht* pogrom. Goering had attended to the bookkeeping.

If there were Jews, there would have to be riots, and windows would be broken, and goods stolen, and German insurance companies would suffer, and there would continue to be all kinds of complications and nuisance and bother to honest German businessmen and loyal Aryan masses. But if there were no more Jews—

The liquidation of the Jews could now begin in earnest.

THE MONTH IN HISTORY

TWO PARTIES—TWO WORLDS—TWO PEOPLES

MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM

Toward a Political Alignment

THERE were many who saw in recent developments the beginning of a political realignment in the United States. Actually, however, there had been no meaningful political alignment in this country for over a half century. Political parties, in the sense in which they were known in most other countries of the world, had not existed. In their place had been more or less fortuitous alliances of disparate elements which, although they described themselves as parties, had no common bases of principle, no effective organizational discipline, and not even any common bond of interest except the desire for power. As to the purposes which that power was intended to serve, these varied according to the individual politician, so that the aims of different elements within one "party" were often diametrically opposed. But in most cases, profit and patronage—"the cohesive power of public plunder"—seemed to be the sole and sufficient purposes animating American political life.

All this was, if not well enough, never-

IN TIMES when month-by-month events give little comfort to the hopes of men in general, and perhaps of Jews in particular, it is the task of the writer of this department to winnow out the facts from the welter of belief, propaganda, actuality, and emotion that constitutes present-day public information and opinion. MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM has had many years of experience as a news analyst. The judgments expressed here are his own, and in no sense represent or reflect official policy. Mr. Goldbloom was associate editor of the magazine *Common Sense*. He was born in New York City in 1911 and is a graduate of Columbia University.

theless bearable so long as the United States was characterized by an indefinitely expanding economy, capable of absorbing social strains, and blunting the edge of class and group conflicts. There were, of course, areas in which this had never been the case. In the South, with its closed colonial economy, conflicts had been real and desperate. But they had not been resolved within the framework of the traditional American two-party system. Rather, that system had broken down under the strain of a situation which threatened to infuse it with genuine political content, and had been replaced by one-party dictatorship. The Democratic party of the South had, on the whole, a real and definite political position based on preserving so far as possible the political, economic, and social relations existing before the Civil War. But, with rare exceptions, those in the South who disagreed with that position had no opportunity to make themselves felt.

In the North and West, it was only in times of economic crisis that political conflicts tended to relate themselves to real divisions of interest or ideology. At other times they centered on personalities, and were determined by the effectiveness of political machines, modified by an occasional popular desire to turn the rascals out—or to vote against Aristides because one was tired of hearing him called "the Just."

The United States was not unique among nations in having developed this type of political system. The Conservatives of Disraeli and the Liberals of Gladstone had both united within themselves elements almost as disparate as those which formed the Democratic and Republican organizations here. But politics in England adjusted itself

to the realities of modern life far sooner than in the United States, so that first the Liberal party lost its Whigs to the Conservatives, and later the Labor party arose to confront both with an opposition which challenged not merely the details of their programs but their entire frame of reference. Similarly, the growth of socialist and labor parties in other nations of the world introduced a clear line of demarcation such as American politics, nationally, never knew.

But in recent years the need for a party system capable of permitting the expression of genuine differences had been becoming ever more obvious. Even those who still defended the traditional American setup were forced to admit, with Allan Nevins, that: "The alliance of low-tariff Iowa farmers and high-tariff Pennsylvania ironmasters under the Republican aegis, and the alliance of Tammany Hall with Alabama agrarians under the Democratic banner, have not made for political honesty of the austere type."

What was at stake, however, was something even more important than political honesty. It was, in fact, the faith of the American people in representative institutions as an adequate instrument for the expression of their basic needs and desires. The widespread cynicism in regard to "politics" was largely traceable to the conviction that issues were decided elsewhere than at the polls. In times of prosperity, this merely resulted in a deterioration of political morality and an avoidance of all basic problems; in times of crisis, it could easily bring about the collapse of American democracy in favor of some totalitarian system capable of at least presenting an appearance of political principle.

The Facade of Unity

The latent conflicts in the United States appeared to be bursting the traditional political system apart at the seams at a moment when there was a greater degree of superficial popular agreement on most issues than had been the case in many years. Partly, this paradox stemmed from the fact that events of recent years had resulted in a continuous spotlight on foreign policy—a field in which many roads could lead to the same position. Again, this very factor

of widespread agreement had produced Democratic and Republican candidates and platforms that were almost indistinguishable. At the same time the real issues that split American society were beginning to force themselves to the surface, after a period in which they had been overlaid by a world war and the personality of Franklin Roosevelt.

The effects of this contradiction between the forms of politics and its content were most obvious in the case of the Democratic party, whose elements in recent years had in any case been even more various than those of the Republicans. The latter party, too, had the prospect of office to reconcile its antagonistic elements, if not to each other, at least to each other's company.

It was mostly, though by no means entirely, from those who had voted Democratic in the recent past that Henry Wallace drew his support. To a large extent, those who voted for him would do so not out of principle but out of disgust with the meaninglessness of the Democratic and Republican alternatives. Perhaps a fourth of his votes would come from those who consciously or unconsciously accepted at least a major part of the position of his Communist sponsors. Another, probably somewhat smaller, section of his support would derive from pacifists and conservative isolationists in revolt against the bi-partisan foreign policy. Colonel McCormick was unlikely to cast his ballot for Wallace, but some who accepted his general position undoubtedly would. The largest group of Wallace supporters, however, seemed likely to consist of persons having little in common with his announced position. Thus the Gallup Poll showed that a majority of those who expected to vote for Wallace favored the Marshall Plan and believed that American policy towards Russia was insufficiently "tough." Most of them—as well as many who would vote the tickets of the two old parties—would probably have preferred to support a non-Communist progressive party, had one been in the field. And they might yet rally to one after this election if those liberal and labor leaders who had long accepted its necessity in theory but always maintained that the time was not ripe, were at last to decide that a beginning could no longer be postponed.

Such a development might conceivably even be hastened by the other rebellion besetting the Democratic organization. For, though the cause of Southern discontent was the adoption (over the opposition of administration forces) of a civil-rights plank satisfactory to liberals and labor groups, its effect was to decrease that chance of election which formed the principal attraction binding those groups to the Democratic party. At the same time, neither a position on civil rights so long belied by the administration's consistent failure to implement it in the armed forces and the Canal Zone—both of them, places where no legislation was required—nor a Democratic demand for the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act, passed with the support of half the Democrats in Congress, seemed likely to be sufficient to retain the enthusiastic support of the liberals.

For the moment, however, most of these were looking around rather disconsolately for a place to go. Their coalition with the Southern Democrats on behalf of General Eisenhower had—perhaps fortunately for them—been frustrated by the General's persistent unwillingness to leave Morningside Heights. It was doubtful if Henry Wallace would at this stage acquire the support of many who were not yet committed to him. A few would unquestionably regard Thomas E. Dewey as the lesser evil. Some of the more politically sophisticated seemed likely to vote for Norman Thomas on the Socialist ticket. But the majority of the liberals and laborites would probably go listlessly to the polls on election day to cast a reluctant ballot for Harry Truman, in memory of the man who had chosen him for the vice presidency in 1944.

Even without the loss of the two or three Southern states which might be expected to go for the secessionist ticket of J. Strom Thurmond and Fielding Wright, however, President Truman's chances of re-election did not appear bright. And the loss of federal patronage, as well as many local offices, which appeared in prospect, would still further weaken the cement holding together the pieces of the Democratic party.

But any major political realignment still belonged to the future. The present reality was that, whether Governor Dewey

achieved his expected victory or President Truman confounded all the prophets, neither American domestic nor American foreign policy was likely to be significantly altered.

The US Abroad

THE basic aspects of American foreign policy depended far less on decisions made in Washington than on those arrived at in Moscow. If the Soviet Union was determined to dominate Europe at the cost of war, Washington might hasten or delay the showdown slightly, but it could not preserve the peace except at a price which the people of the United States clearly would not accept. If, on the other hand, the Soviet Union was intent on peace, no American government would seek war.

The key to Russia's intentions seemed still to be Berlin. Here, the Soviet blockade of the Western powers was entering its second month. After some initial hesitation, the United States and Britain had clearly stated their intention of remaining in the city despite the Russian stoppage of surface traffic. And they had implemented their determination by flying in huge tonnages of food and other essentials. Within a short period they were bringing in over two thousand tons by air each day; it was expected that, when additional planes had been brought to Germany and landing fields in Berlin had been expanded, this might be almost tripled.

The air supply of Berlin was an impressive demonstration of the technical virtuosity of the Western powers, as well as of their will to hold Berlin. In both respects, it immensely strengthened their position in the battle for Germany and Europe. But, while it could avert starvation and keep Berlin alive, it could not furnish the city a basis for a normal existence. Only a resumption of surface communications could do that.

These communications did not necessarily have to be with the West, however. American military authorities in Berlin offered to pay dollars, at more than the world price, for Czech potatoes and Polish coal if these were delivered in Berlin. Both countries needed the dollars, and had unsalable surpluses of the commodities in question. (The Poles had been unsuccessful

fully offering their coal to Western European nations which preferred to meet their needs elsewhere.) But the Soviet Union refused to provide them with transit facilities to Berlin, and they were consequently forced to refuse the offer, a fact whose significance was not likely to be lost on the people of either country.

The main hope of relieving the siege of Berlin of course lay in bringing direct pressure to bear on the Russians. With this purpose in view, the three Western powers sent almost identical notes to the Soviet Union. All demanded the reopening of normal communications between Berlin and the West; all asserted that neither threats nor pressure would induce them to leave the city; and all offered to negotiate points of disagreement in regard to Berlin, provided the blockade were first lifted. The Russian reply declared that, by taking steps to set up a West German government, the Western powers had violated the agreements on which their presence in Berlin was based and forfeited all right to stay there. In turn, it asked for negotiations on the whole German question. And it made no promises in regard to lifting the blockade. But on the other hand it did not specifically declare that this would continue. And, at the same time that they were replying to the Western notes, the Russians announced the suspension of two German railroad officials on a charge of neglecting to keep the tracks on the line to the West in proper repair. As long as they kept up the pretense that "technical difficulties" were responsible for the barring of rail and road traffic to Berlin, it was possible for them to back down with a minimum of embarrassment. But whether they would do so remained to be seen.

Meanwhile, the Western powers prepared to take further diplomatic action. It was rumored that the next step would be a renewed demand for the reopening of traffic, this time with a deadline. This was likely to be coupled both with a threat of further action, and with a somewhat broader offer to negotiate than that in the previous note. If the Russians were still adamant, the Western powers were reported ready to take the case before the Security Council. That body would, of course, be subject to a Soviet veto if it were to con-

sider sanctions; short of that, however, the USSR would be unable to block consideration of a case in which it was itself charged with aggression. And if the Council were once to rule Russia an aggressor, the Western powers would be placed in an excellent moral position for the application of those economic sanctions which they had at their command. Such sanctions would probably not cripple the Russian economy, but they would impose a burden on it which would be a high price to pay for continuing the blockade of Berlin.

Meanwhile, of course, the possibility of an "incident" remained. Yet it did not seem likely that anything short of deliberate and systematic shooting would be permitted by either side to precipitate war. Certainly the United States was not apt to permit anything less to provoke it to the ultimate step; if the Soviet Union chose to regard a minor incident as a *casus belli*, it would only be because the Russian leaders had made up their minds to fight.

Rebellion in Yugoslavia

ONE factor which was likely to cause the Kremlin to hesitate before starting a war was the sudden break between Moscow and the Yugoslav Communists. Nothing precisely similar had ever happened before; Communist parties had occasionally broken with the Comintern in the good old days, but the latter had always been able to reconstitute a band of true believers to replace the heretics. In Yugoslavia, however, the situation was different. Tito was in power, and, as the bulletin of the Cominform so accurately pointed out, his secret police were ubiquitous.

It was difficult to determine the precise cause of the break between Tito and Moscow. The statement of the Cominform denouncing the Yugoslav party accused it of a list of crimes including Menshevism, Trotskyism, Bukharinism, going too fast, not going fast enough, excessive nationalism, subservience to the West, and putting spies on the trail of Russian representatives in Yugoslavia. Obviously, not all of these charges could be true simultaneously. The last, despite a Yugoslav denial, almost certainly was. For in the course of the exchange of billingsgate which followed, it developed that Tito had seized and im-

prisoned—as crypto-fascists—two members of his cabinet on whom Moscow had been relying to undermine his position among Yugoslav Communists.

This did not, however, explain why the Cominform had started to plot against him in the first place. Publicly, he had been as loyal to the Soviet bloc as it could ask. His anti-Western orientation had been demonstrated almost daily by incidents between Yugoslav and British or American forces in Trieste and on the Carinthian border, as well as by a steady barrage of abuse in the Yugoslav press. And he had the largest and best-equipped army of any Soviet satellite.

The most probable explanation appeared to be that Tito was actually enough of a Yugoslav nationalist to interfere seriously with Russian policy at times. Thus, a Yugoslav gesture in regard to Trieste just before the Italian elections might have been of great value to the Italian Communists. Instead, the declaration of the Western powers in favor of that city's return to Italy went uncountered—except by the obviously unacceptable proposal to exchange Trieste, which Yugoslavia did not have, for Gorizia, which Italy did have.

Again, Tito had been pressing for the formation of a Balkan federation, which he hoped and the Russians apparently feared that he would dominate. And shortly before the publication of the Cominform's attack, Yugoslav Communists had publicly charged that some Bulgarian leaders had imperialist designs on Yugoslav Macedonia.

Perhaps this unwillingness to sacrifice his own ambitions to the will of Moscow was the basic cause of the split. Yet even so, the timing of the Cominform's attack was surprising. Certainly, coming in the midst of the Berlin crisis, it did not strengthen Russia's hand there. Perhaps Tito's arrest of its agents led the Cominform to act precipitately, in the hope that an open attack would bring about a revolt in the Yugoslav party before Tito had time to carry through a thorough purge. Perhaps it was merely that, once the internal conflict had been begun by the Russian party's original circulation of charges against the Yugoslavs, the timetable was more or less automatic. But it was also possible that the Cominform's public attack

on Tito was quite deliberately timed to embarrass Soviet Foreign Commissar Molotov. For, next to Stalin, the most prominent members of the Politburo were Molotov and Andrei Zhdanov—the head of the Cominform. If anything happened to Stalin, one or the other of them seemed likely to be his successor. And the fact that Stalin took no apparent part either in the Yugoslav dispute or in that over Berlin made it necessary to consider the possibility that his health was failing.

Whatever the cause of the dispute between Russia and Yugoslavia, there could be no question that it weakened the Soviet bloc. Yugoslavia might still not wish to ally herself with the West. But she could not stand alone indefinitely, and the Russians quickly made it clear that they were not prepared to consider the Yugoslav state as an ally after the expulsion of the Yugoslav Communists from the Cominform. (Indeed, the Soviet Union had never seemed to regard an alliance on equal terms as conceivable, unless the other partner was itself a great power; in all other cases, alliance had been merely the cloak for or the prelude to subjugation.) One after another, the other Communist parties of the world contributed their quota of denunciation to the campaign against Tito. And the Communist-dominated states of Eastern Europe invoked sanctions against the Yugoslavs. Thus Rumania ceased deliveries of oil to Tito, and Albania—always regarded as a satellite of Yugoslavia, because of its geographical position and diminutive size—expelled various Yugoslav missions and cut off trade between the two countries. One reported result of this use of economic warfare to bring Yugoslavia into line was a Yugoslav effort to purchase oil from Britain and the United States. In the United States, the American Committee for Yugoslav Relief—listed by the Attorney General as a Communist front—announced that it was disbanding.

The area where the split between Tito and the Cominform was most likely to have an immediate effect was Greece. Here, the Communist rebels received aid from Bulgaria, Albania—and Yugoslavia. But their leader, General Markos, had endorsed the Cominform's attack on Tito. Henceforth, Yugoslav aid for the Greek guerillas was

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not likely to be significant. Albanian assistance, too, seemed likely to decrease, since Albania's economy was so closely tied up with that of Yugoslavia that the disruption of commerce between the two countries was likely to have severe adverse effects on the smaller.

There was also another aspect of the rift between Albania and Yugoslavia which deserved consideration. For the border between the two countries could easily become the scene of armed conflict. And a war at the mouth of the Adriatic would not necessarily remain localized, since Russia could hardly avoid intervening on behalf of Albania if—as was almost certain—Tito seemed likely to be victorious.

Other Rifts in the Curtain

If the Yugoslav revolt was the most spectacular sign of discontent within the Soviet orbit, it was not the only one. In Czechoslovakia, there still seemed to be many who were not altogether reconciled to Communist dictatorship. Some evidence of this was supplied by the stream of fugitive politicians and army officers who continued to slip across the border into the US zone of Germany, as well as by the numerous arrests for espionage and conspiracy which the Czech government announced almost daily. And there was a striking display of opposition to the regime at the Sokol festival in Prague. Many of the marchers carried small American flags, while others shouted a demand for ex-President Benes and averted their faces when they passed the reviewing stand where Communist President Gottwald stood. (There was also considerable applause when the visiting Yugoslav Sokols deployed themselves to spell out Tito's name—since this was after the Cominform's attack.)

And in Hungary, *New York Times* correspondent John MacCormac reported that there was a sharp rivalry for Communist leadership between Premier Rakosi and Minister of the Interior Rajk. MacCormac cited as one point of difference the fact that Rakosi was a Jew and Rajk an anti-Semite, whose brother had been a leading Nazi. He also said that Rajk—who had charge of the police—believed in mass executions of political opponents, while Rakosi wished to be more selective.

In Rumania, too, all was not happy in the Communist family. There, power was gradually concentrating in the hands of Moscow-trained Ana Pauker, while other leaders suffered eclipse. Thus, Lucretiu Patrascanu—Communist member of the junta which had overthrown the Antonescu dictatorship—was now in disgrace, and Vice-Premier Gheorgiu-Dei seemed about to follow him.

All this might, and probably would, eventually lead to a firmer consolidation of the dictatorships in these countries, just as the downfall and slaughter of the Old Bolsheviks had in Russia. But from the Russian point of view, the time for a war was after that consolidation had been accomplished, not while it was in process.

War and Truce in Palestine

THE struggle for Europe surrounded the conflict in Palestine with a certain air of unreality. For any solution of the Palestinian question could have meaning only in a world at peace; if war came, the Middle East would be a major battleground, and its states would be certain to be occupied by the armies of one or the other belligerent and their sovereignty reduced to a pale fiction.

Meanwhile, however, Jews and Arabs took the question of Palestine seriously enough. So did the United Nations mediator, Count Bernadotte, although his zeal was not always pleasing to either of the parties to the dispute. Both were restive under his strict enforcement of the conditions of the truce; neither welcomed his proposals for a permanent settlement. Indeed, it was doubtful whether Count Bernadotte actually hoped that these would prove acceptable. For the Arabs were asked not merely to accept the existence of the State of Israel, but to yield it relatively fertile Western Galilee in exchange for the parched Negev. At the same time, the Jews were called on to relinquish all claim to Jerusalem, and to permit it to become part of an Arab state formed out of Transjordan and part of Palestine. And immigration, after the first two years, was to be subject to UN review in terms of the principle of absorptive capacity. To each side, this represented a retreat from positions many times emphatically reiterated; it was therefore not

surprising that neither found the Bernadotte proposals satisfactory.

Probably the real purpose of the proposals—delivered as they were only a few days before the truce was due to expire—was to maintain a degree of negotiation which would serve to justify the extension of the truce. The avoidance of renewed warfare was a goal which took precedence over all others. The longer fighting continued, the more meager the resources which Palestine would offer for division between the contending parties.

And the great powers were also committed—one was tempted to say, beyond their depth—in regard to the issue. On the one hand, Britain's laboriously acquired foothold in the Arab world, as well as her quarter century as the mandatory power for Palestine, made a total withdrawal from the area impossible, however much she might desire it. Though the last British troops left Palestine on June 30, a month ahead of schedule, Britain still retained interests and responsibilities, both in Palestine and the Arab states, of which she was unable to divest herself. On the other, the United States was becoming ever more deeply involved politically, although American economic interests in the Middle East were still not a major factor. Having first sponsored partition and then, after various waverings and hesitations, given the new State of Israel its blessing, the United States had assumed an inescapable responsibility for the future of the area. As to the Soviet Union, that power was only too anxious to undertake further commitments in regard to Palestine.

Hence when, on July 9, the truce ended and fighting resumed in Palestine, the great powers were unable to accept the situation as final, and the Security Council ordered a new truce of indefinite duration. Count Bernadotte had asked a thirty day extension, and then one of ten days. Both proposals had been accepted by Israel, but rejected by the Arab League on the ground that the previous truce had worked to the advantage of Israel by permitting it to build up its military strength.

There seemed some reason to believe that this had actually been the case. In Jerusalem, the UN's truce commission had complained to the Security Council of Jew-

ish aggression, including the seizure of strategic buildings flying the UN flag. But a more basic reason for the Arab rejection of Bernadotte's request for an extension of the truce appeared to be a division within the Arab League. In this, Abdullah of Transjordan seemed to be on one side and all the rest of the Arab states on the other. Under Bernadotte's settlement proposals—which were generally believed to have the support in principle if not in detail of Britain and the US—all the Arab parts of Palestine would have been given to Abdullah. He therefore had some reason to waver on the question of principle. The other Arab states, on the other hand, could only regard the aggrandizement of Abdullah as a consummation to be avoided. Syria and Lebanon feared that an enlarged Transjordan would threaten their independence; Egypt, whose troops had actual control of most of the Negev, was no more anxious to transfer it to Abdullah than to Israel. (So strong was Egypt's opposition to a new truce that she resumed fighting before the expiration of the old one.)

But despite the opposition of the Arab states, one very potent force was working to compel them to renew the truce. Britain, without waiting for the Security Council to act, announced that she would continue her embargo on arms to the Arabs, and would moreover hold up the quarterly subsidy payment due Abdullah. Since the American embargo on arms to the Middle East remained in effect, and since the Russians and their satellites were loath to sell the Arabs arms except for scarce dollars, this meant that the Arabs were at a grave disadvantage. All pro-British elements were forced out of the cabinets of Egypt and Iraq, and even in Amman there were demonstrations against "British imperialism." But the British position remained unchanged.

It was therefore very difficult for the Arabs to resist the Security Council's new truce order. Abdullah, who was most drastically affected by the sanctions which the British imposed, again pressed for acceptance. Apparently, he backed up his argument by intimating that the Arab Legion might not be able to continue effective action if the League rejected the UN order. In any case, the League reluctantly acceded

to it, but asked that the truce be given a definite duration, that all Jewish immigration to Palestine be suspended during it, and that provision be made for the return of Arab refugees to the homes from which they had been driven.

It was one thing, however, to secure the agreement of both parties to a truce and another to guarantee that it would be observed. Count Bernadotte's staff—never altogether sufficient—had been dissolved in the interim between the two truces; until it was reconstituted, there was a constant danger that one side or the other would seek to gain additional advantages before there were observers on the scene. Such incidents could easily lead to reprisal and even the resumption of full scale war.

Certainly the events of the first few days of the new truce were disturbing. Even in Jerusalem, where a cease-fire had been ordered and accepted two days before that in the rest of Palestine, it had almost immediately been broken by a large-scale battle. This had apparently been the result of a disagreement as to the terms of the cease-fire; Israeli troops had attacked and seized the suburb of Ein Karim on the ground that it was outside the municipal limits of Jerusalem and hence not covered by the truce, and the Arab Legion in Jerusalem proper had retaliated. Subsequently, there were a number of other skirmishes in Jerusalem, with each side accusing the other of aggression.

Elsewhere, the situation was even worse. Charging that the Syrians had recaptured a village within the borders of Syria after the time of the cease-fire, and that there had been other aggressions by Syrian and Iraqi troops, Israel announced that it would continue the war against both states. In the South, there were occasional skirmishes between Jewish and Egyptian troops. And the Egyptians charged that a plane had bombed Cairo.

Nevertheless, violations of the truce seemed likely to subside when Count Bernadotte and his new staff reached Palestine. When there were observers on the spot to apportion the blame, and if necessary to recommend penalties, neither side would have any further excuse for attempting to

restrain the truce violations of the other by retaliating in kind.

It was still questionable, however, whether the cessation of actual warfare would by itself be sufficient to create an atmosphere conducive to the making of peace. If the Arabs had somewhat modified their position since the beginning of the war, they still remained bitterly opposed to the existence of the State of Israel. So far, the nearest that any Arab spokesman had come to accepting the idea of a Jewish state in Palestine was Arab League Secretary Azzam Pasha's proposal that the Jews be given a small area as a sort of "Vatican State." This, he said, might be anywhere—"even in Tel Aviv." But he insisted that the remainder of Palestine should be made into a single Palestinian state, "protecting both Arabs and Jews."

If the Arabs held to their original demands in most respects, the Zionists appeared to have increased theirs. In addition to the territory which they had been allotted under the Assembly resolution, they now spoke with increasing frequency of holding what they had conquered by the sword—or at least enough of it to make the outlines of their state somewhat less illogical than the Assembly's partition resolution had done.

Certainly Count Bernadotte would not have an easy time bringing agreement out of the present Arab and Zionist positions. Nor, failing agreement, did there seem to be in the offing any effective way of enforcing a decision. As Belgium had pointed out in the Security Council's discussion of possible sanctions if either side failed to heed the cease-fire order, the Berlin situation did not give promise of that great-power cooperation which alone could make possible the UN's use of force. As for economic sanctions, the Arab states appeared to have economic weapons which, in the present state of world affairs, could prove at least as deadly as any which might be used against them.

Nevertheless, Count Bernadotte appeared determined to continue his efforts to obtain an agreement between the warring parties, despite Soviet protests that this was not the proper function of a mediator.

FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

CHAPLAINS ON LAND AND SEA

A One-Man Survey

HARRY GERSH

I WAS having a drink with this guy recently and he told me about his experiences in the war. His chaplains must have climbed out of some recruiting poster or movie script. All, without exception, were good, kind, patient, secure in their faith and beloved by their men. Well, mine weren't.

Army chaplains, this guy said further, and here too he was echoing a universal conception, were better than navy chaplains because the army is more progressive in race and religion than is the navy. Etc., etc.

(There is another intellectual dictum to which the preceding paragraphs bow: magazine articles must have a unifying idea, teach

a lesson. The following incidents have a unifying theme: chaplains. And they teach a lesson: about time-honored beliefs. Some check, some quite distinctly do not.)

For the purposes of settling arguments, acting wiser than other veterans, and being also an authority on chaplains, I was fortunate in the last war. I served in both the army and navy during the period of active hostilities.

The army came first.

I WAS an armored force man, qualified to shoot eight weapons, drive tanks, half-tracks, and jeeps. I was a platoon sergeant, too, boss of sixty basic trainees. The stripes were a reward for a high I.Q., for careful attention to all field manuals, and to shoe polishing equipment, and for a loud voice. There was one other Jew in the platoon. About six in the whole company.

I met my first chaplain as sergeant, 2nd Platoon, C Company, 1st Battalion, 2nd Group. Our group insignia was a charging rhinoceros.

The sergeant of a training platoon has a hard job. Each training period ended with a thirty-two mile hike with full pack. And me with my *gassen-geyer* feet. Teaching trainees to shoot the M-1 is fairly easy. But there are bad moments when a new soldier turns casually from the firing line to ask a question, and as casually turns his rifle until the muzzle is six inches from your belly. But the hardest part of the job had to do with weekend passes.

Every Saturday noon, after inspection, the men lined up outside my barracks cubi-

IN THE March 1948 COMMENTARY, a "returned chaplain" had some candid words to say about his congregations, both civil and military. HARRY GERSH here tells us how the chaplains looked to at least one soldier and sailor—by happy circumstance he was both. COMMENTARY'S anonymous chaplain drew some fairly strong generalizations about the state of American Israel; Mr. Gersh leaves us to draw our own generalizations about chaplains, if any—and incidentally about another much mulled-over topic, anti-Semitism in the armed forces. Mr. Gersh will be remembered by readers of this department for his exercises in informal sociology: "Mama's Cooking: Minority Report" (October 1947) and "The Jewish Painter" (January 1948). Mr. Gersh is a member of the publicity department of the Textile Workers Union of the CIO. Born in New York in 1912, he has had a varied career as newspaperman, union organizer, educator, and contributor to COMMENTARY and other publications.

cle for their weekend passes. I would sit at a table and dispense largesse as if it were my own. The men came in alphabetically and I filled out their names and numbers over the captain's signature.

Soldiers come in conflict with the Articles of War, with army and post regulations, with orders from superiors and with officers. The conflict is caused by stupidity, forgetfulness, stubbornness, and the sheer impossibility of conforming to every order and regulation. But they do come in conflict with them—and then the soldiers are punished. The most common, and the most feared, punishment is restriction to the company street over the weekend. That means no pass. And no pass means no city, no bars, no girls, no privacy, no blessed freedom.

Refusal of a pass is always the sergeant's fault. He's the one who gives passes to the lucky ones and withholds them from the lawbreakers. Sometimes it is the sergeant's fault. He can recommend punishment for non-compliance with his orders. But mostly it isn't. He has more effective ways of maintaining discipline.

Men have to curse when they are punished. They curse their fellows, the non-coms, the officers, the generals, the army, the system, and God. All are held accountable for their plight. It's allowable. But there are limits.

Each Saturday I gave out the passes and each Saturday I had to say, "None for you, Joe," to a select few. There was always one who took it personally. From me to him. Then the cursing took on a new note.

THERE is something about hate that sharpens the hater's eyes. Men who had been taking orders from me for weeks—in a most friendly manner—without a thought of my antecedents, would suddenly discover that I was a Jew when they couldn't get a pass. Maybe the fear I felt every Saturday noon elongated my nose, curled my hair, put the mark of phylacteries on my brow. The restricted men were always conscious of my Jewishness.

In the language of fear and hate the letter "b" has a peculiar affinity with the word Jew. Contempt is usually expressed by Jew-bunny. Active hatred by Jew-bastard. I have been cursed a thousand times and each time these hyphenates reappear. It's odd.

So the disappointed soldiers would walk out of my room mouthing curses. If the words were mumbled and only faintly heard, I did nothing. My majesty was not assailed. But if the words were plainly heard—not by me, I heard them before they were formed—by the waiting soldiers, then I had to do something. Thus are we creatures of a culture. My grandfather, a wiser and more faithful man, would have let the words go regardless of the listeners. I didn't.

It is a commentary on something or other. The men who voiced most strongly their "God-damned Jew-bastards" were always larger, stronger, and more adept than I. But I am a brave man. Each Saturday noon I rose to the bait.

"What'd you say, Joe," my eyes bleak, my voice hard, my sergeant's stripes prominent.

Sometimes they backed down. Usually they didn't. "You heard me, you kike."

There would be a flurry of arms, grunted breaths and the exciting sound of fist on flesh. Then we were separated. But not before it was obvious that he was the better man.

After the fight I continued to give out the remaining passes, tenderly feeling the bruise on cheek or chin, exploring the growing blackness under an eye, catching the blood dripping from nose or lip.

I was not interested in silent martyrdom. After my Saturday chores I would hang around the company day room. I'd ask the first sergeant some unimportant questions, making sure that my wounds were not hidden. I'd wait until the officers came out and face them directly, stop them with a pleasantry. But they never asked me about the split lip, the black eye. They knew why the blood and bruises were on my face. And I knew that they knew. Week after week I knew that they knew. It was quite a game. But the men have to settle things among themselves. Mustn't coddle them or interfere.

ONE Saturday afternoon I got tired of being beaten up. I went to see the chaplain.

I didn't know what I was looking for. I still don't. Perhaps I wanted comforting. Perhaps a lessening of the pain by sharing. Maybe I wanted an officer to acknowledge my bruises, an officer who would have to

listen and maybe understand. Wasn't he a soldier, a Jew, a Rabbi in Israel?

The chaplain's assistant took my name, rank, and serial number. He wanted to know the reason for my coming. We sparred about with that for a while. He offered the fact that it was Saturday afternoon, the chaplain was busy, he had to go home, maybe the assistant could help me and suchlike irrelevancies. But finally I was admitted to the chaplain's office.

The office was in the chapel. On Friday evenings and Saturday mornings the chapel was Jewish. On Sundays and Wednesday evenings it was Protestant. The Catholic chaplain had his own church. Jewish services were over for the week and the Ark and Torah were in a closet behind the chaplain's desk. Folded prayer shawls were piled carefully on a lower shelf. I had never worn a prayer shawl nor read my portion of the Law from the scroll, but I looked at them and felt better.

The chaplain was a small man, quick, graceful. He had had all the required courses and knew his business. But he didn't have the answer to my question.

I told him the story of the 2nd Platoon, C Company. He listened sympathetically with the correct half questions and nods of the head. The occasional glances at his watch were almost imperceptible. After the story was told I looked at him expectantly. He looked back.

"Yes, sergeant, it's tough. That's the way it goes."

And that's the way it went. I don't know what I wanted from the rabbi. He couldn't change my soldiers and I didn't want him to make an issue of my troubles before the captain. But whatever he gave me wasn't enough. I felt put off.

I knew all the stock answers for anti-Semitism. The economic, the sociological, the psychological. The cures were beyond me and beyond the chaplain. Maybe I had come seeking a deeper refuge. I didn't find it.

He was the first chaplain, the first rabbi I had turned to—and been turned away from. If I had had a foxhole, I would have been an atheist.

NEXT episode, in another place. A wooded place with fifty or sixty light tanks and

auxiliary vehicles hidden under the trees. Each tank entered the wood from another direction so that no rutted path would betray our position to the air. Inside the wood, lounging about their tanks, were about four hundred men—some loud, some silent, some sleeping. All scared.

I was casually bitching to my crew about the mud on the bogie wheels and did they grease the drive sprockets enough when the chaplain came up. He was a real hell-for-leather armored force chaplain. Tall, well-built, well-dressed for a forward area.

The boys started to get up when they saw the shine of brass approaching but they relaxed when they saw the metal cross. A chaplain wouldn't dare report a man. He didn't disappoint them.

"Sit right still, boys," he said, "it's only Chaplain Mac." Later we decided he had seen too many movies.

The men were scared and would have listened to anyone. The fresh-faced shave-tail could have won their eternal loyalty had he known how. The chaplain should have known how. But he was one of the boys. He didn't want differentials—except in uniform, chow, and latrines.

Chaplain Mac asked us how things were going, taking care to include several technical questions about the tank and guns. That, too, proved he was one of the boys. But the crew was tired of tanks and guns. Right now they wanted home and momma. So Mac pulled his best, sure-fire gag.

He pulled out of his musette bag two large, shiny punches. The kind conductors use to punch tickets. He brandished them under our noses and smiled broadly.

"OK, boys, you seem to have a lot of grief. Pull out your T.S. cards and I'll punch them."

That was it and I still don't know what was wrong with it.

T.S.* was the most useful phrase in any service. Any dogface past basic training could put more meanings and expressions into those two words than my grandfather could put into *staitch*. A phrase useful for all occasions. Except this one.

And still I don't think I expected the chaplain to walk about with blessings or miracles flowing from his fingertips.

* Free (and inaccurate) translation for civilians: tough situation.

A COUPLE of months later I switched to the navy. Because of my previous military training the navy allowed me to cut boot training from sixty days to eight weeks, and they made me acting company commander.

Rules, regulations, and rank are more sacred in the navy than in the army—if possible. I saw my first navy chaplain immediately after breaking my first navy rule.

Sunday morning at 0900 all Catholic boots were mustered and marched off to services. At 1000 Protestants and Jews were marched off to their respective services. By this time I was tired of being a boot and looking for a good issue to fight about. Like a bored Communist looking for a protest picketing. I found it in the Sunday services. I refused to go.

The first time I was caught looking through a *Captain Midnight* comic book while everyone else was communing with God, I could have got away with it. The navy is easy on boots. I could have said I was lost, didn't know where I belonged. But I was tough. I said I didn't want to go to services. Bells rang, gongs clanged, and fire flashed in the battalion commander's eyes.

"What the hell do you mean you won't go. You're in the navy now. You go where we tell you. Don't pull any of that army crap around here."

(Back then I could have warned Harry Truman of the difficulties of a unified military establishment.)

I was reasonable with the battalion commander. After all, he was a chief petty officer—a boatswain's mate at that—therefore a reasonable man.

"I'm not trying to break regulations, Chief. But I don't think anyone in the American Army or Navy can be forced to go to church. We do have freedom of worship. I might be a Mohammedan. Maybe it's against my religion to go to church."

The chief was reasonable but it was unreasonable for me to suggest that a Mohammedan might be in the US Navy. He threatened me with everything from eighty days bread and water to flogging. Then he put me down for a visit with the training officer.

The training officer was a genuine, gold braid, jay gee, officer-of-the-line. The emblem on his cap was salt-tarnished. He knew

that he could order me to attend services and then hang me for disobeying a direct order. But he knew also that I was old enough, mad enough, and stubborn enough to make a fuss with some Congressman or newspaper. He had read my records and found that I claimed to have been a newspaperman.

So he sent me to the senior chaplain. The senior chaplain was a man to strike fear in the hearts of all enlisted men and officers to the rank of lieutenant-commander. He was a regular Navy captain. Four gold stripes encircled his forearm and his cap visor was heavy with command braid.

It's hard to describe a navy captain to a non-navy man. In the army awe and fear mount with rank right on up to the top—the five star boys. But the navy captain has a special niche. He is equal in pay, perquisites, and protocol to an army colonel, but he's much more. He is lord and master and on the right hand of God. A battleship may carry an admiral as fleet or force commander, but the captain of that battleship is boss.

And I had been sent to see a Captain, USN, Chaplains Corps. He had twenty-six years in and knew how to see an ordinary seaman. He asked me wasn't I proud to be a Jew and didn't I believe in God. Then tried the one about older men and company commanders being examples to the young boys. Finally he gave up and said I could do as I pleased about services but to watch my step.

The next Sunday I flaunted my Godlessness and read comics while the boys marched off to services. On the second Sunday I mustered my company, told the Jewish boys to fall out and re-form and marched them off to the chapel with myself at their head. The navy always wins. Here's why in this case.

ONE of the indoctrination sessions scheduled for all boots was a talk by the chaplain of the base. A couple of days after my victory over the chaplain captain our battalion was marched into the theater to hear the lecture. We sprawled in the unaccustomed luxury of the officers' seats and waited. The chief let go with a storm-at-sea voice.

"TALion, HUTenSHUN."

We snapped to our feet as three officers walked out on the stage. Two jay gees and one full lieutenant. They seated themselves and we followed.

The chief cautioned us to sit upright, listen closely, and remember well what was to be said, for out at sea we would be damn (pardon me, sir) glad for what the chaplain was about to tell us.

The lieutenant rose, walked forward, and said, "I am a rabbi."

My reaction was similar to that of every boot in the battalion. I sucked in my breath, and sat forward. Then I sat back and listened hard.

The speech was unimportant. It was the standard M1A3 chaplain's spiel to new servicemen. But the man was smart. His first sentence proved it. Most of the boys had never seen a real, live rabbi before. Most of them had never even thought of one. If they had run across the word it had evoked a mental picture of some anti-Semitic stereotype. And here was a man, an officer, the senior officer present, the man whom the chief and the jay gees made way for and said "sir" to, a man who calmly walked forward and said, "I am a rabbi." I loved him.

After he finished speaking the two jay gees, one the Catholic chaplain, the other Protestant, seconded his speech. But the rabbi had given it.

I don't know whether the training officers thought about it or whether they fought against it. But that's navy. The senior working chaplain was a rabbi. He ranked all but the administrative chaplains. So he gave the welcoming speech. Thousands of young men saw the navy for the first time at this station. The tough, rough, manly, do-or-die navy. And the first official chaplain they saw said, "I am a rabbi."

It was a kind of snobbism that made me smile at that chaplain, that allowed me to sit back and *shep noches* as he spoke. He was not the senior man because of special worth or because he was a Jew. He got there because he was older or had more degrees or more seniority. He was there, though.

The rabbi and his speech was one reason for giving up my costly victory over the US Navy. This is the other.

Each Sunday morning the Jewish women of Fall River left their warm homes, their husbands and children, packed great hamp-

ers of food, and came to Newport Naval Training Station. They unpacked their goods on the ping-pong tables in the rear of the Quonset hut that served as synagogue. They uncovered coffee with real cream, bagel, and lox and cream cheese. All during the services we would sneak glances backward to see the steam rising from the coffee pots, the bright red-pink salmon peeking from the light brown bagel. The services always ended with the singing of *Eloheinu*. The tempo was much faster than a good cantor would allow because the odor of the coffee kept drifting toward the Ark.

THE last week of boot training was feverish. Men who had never read the front page of a newspaper suddenly displayed great interest in current events. It's nice to know in what ocean you're soon to be floating and who's going to be lobbing shells at you. Even the men assigned to specialist schools for further training became interested in the progress of the war, in their own progress in the navy, in their families, and in what happens when you are sick, wounded, or dead.

During that week the Catholic chaplain sent word that he would distribute St. Christopher medals to any boy wanting or needing one. The Jewish chaplain passed the word that he had sacred scrolls to be worn about the neck. One evening the Jewish boys lined up outside the chaplain's office to receive the talismans. I, too, was there, but hanging back to be last. When my turn came I went into the office quickly and sat down looking at the floor. The chaplain looked up and started to frown, then smiled.

"You're the man who wouldn't come to services."

"Yes, sir."

"But I've seen you at services these past weeks, haven't I?" he asked.

"Yes," I said, not being very helpful.

"And now you want one of these." He tossed the small gold cylinder on its nylon string at me. "Why?"

I thought a while before answering. I had been thinking about that same question all day. "Conformity is part of the answer, I guess. This is a good time to be part of the gang. And in part it's not wanting to miss any bets. The risk is great enough. I'll hedge on anything."

"I'm quite sure that my grandfather would never approve of these gadgets. It smacks of idolatry and golden images. But I'm scared and know I'll be more scared. If I can grab this string and get any strength out of it, I'll be glad.

"There's one more reason. When I go aboard ship I'll sound silly announcing 'I'm a Jew.' This way they'll know as soon as I take off my shirt."

The chaplain smiled again and asked if he could put one more question.

"If you were seriously wounded would you want a chaplain near you, a rabbi? Would you say '*Shema Yisrael*'?"

I thought a bit on that too. "Yes, I guess I would. Maybe it wasn't only the lox and bagel."

As I was leaving the chaplain said, "Well, I'm satisfied. Are you?"

AT THE very next base I heard the Jewish chaplain talking to a group of Jewish sailors.

"I don't want you to go around acting like a bunch of *Yidlach*," he said.

THE Islands are any collection of sand, rock, or coral mountain tops big enough to support a palm tree. If you knew to which fleet or task force a man belonged you knew to which islands he referred. But Marshalls, Leeward, Mariannas, or Windward, they were called "the Islands." Down in one of them I found another Jewish chaplain.

I found him sweaty and broken-hearted behind a desk in a Quonset hut. There was an inconspicuous sign that read "Chaplain" outside the hut but no one ever bothered to read it. Bureau of Personnel must have had a quick recount one day and found that they were one Jewish chaplain over quota. This was the chaplain. He had no more business on that bit of sweaty ooze than an enlisted man in nurses' quarters. But BuPers sent him there and only God or BuPers could take him away.

There was no fighting on or near that island. Ships too small or too slow to make the big jumps stopped there for stores and a useless liberty. The men came ashore wanting a movie, some beer, and women. They could usually find the movies if they came at night.

The Catholic chaplain had some legiti-

mate business. He heard confession and celebrated mass on Sunday. The Protestant chaplain also held services on Sunday and several officers turned up dutifully. He ran a pretty good sports program too.

The Jewish chaplain didn't even have a *minyan* on Yom Kippur. It was heart-breaking.

I stopped in to see him because I had nothing else to do and because I was curious. (In one camp I checked the names of borrowers of "good" books and then went to see what they looked like.) The chaplain greeted me nervously and asked whether he could do anything for me. I told him I just wanted to say hello and talk. I don't think he had talked to anyone since he arrived on that island. So he talked to me.

Most of his infrequent visitors came to him by accident or in desperation. They wanted someone to help them out of a scrape. If the trouble was at home the chaplain could set the machinery in motion and feel a sense of accomplishment. But mostly the men were in trouble aboard ship. And they would ask that jay gee chaplain for help.

I was not a B.T.O., a big time operator, but I could far more easily have fixed a summary court martial on a charge of stealing the captain's whisky than that chaplain could have fixed a mast charge of "out of uniform." His clients never came back.

So we sat and talked and smoked. The chaplain and the sailor. He poured out his heart and I listened. He was young and still plagued by the doubts that must plague every seminarist. The meaning of the end of things. His own fitness to lead people to God. Then to his personal problems. The shock of feeling useless while men died fighting for great ideals. Slowly I swung the talk from personal things to general. Things of the mind and soul that make personal problems seem small. From there to the theological answers to these problems. We argued a bit, but not much.

For hours we sat and talked. It was good. Then I left.

The next day I sat on the fantail ready-locker and watched the wake uncurl. I thought about that chaplain and the conversation and suddenly I was shocked. I had been imposed upon. Who was the sailor, who the rabbi anyway?

CEDARS OF LEBANON

SEEK THE PEACE OF JERUSALEM

The Company of Rabbi Judah the Pious

GEDALIAH OF SIEMIATYCZE

ACCORDING to the sages, if a man's wife did not wish to accompany him on the pilgrimage to Jerusalem it was sufficient grounds for divorce—so holy was the road to Zion. Long before the birth of modern Zionism, Jews had voyaged to Jerusalem to partake of its sanctity. But the Holy City, it would seem, has always been more a symbol of man's troubled existence on earth than an actual foretaste of the blessed time to come. If nothing else, the sheer difficulty of getting there—and living there—has testified to this. GEDALIAH OF SIEMIATYCZE here records these difficulties in their 17th-century variants.

Gedaliah belonged to the circle of Rabbi Judah the Pious, who in 1669 departed with his disciples from the Grodno district in Poland in order to lead a holier life in Jerusalem.

OUR master, Rabbi Judah the Pious, arrived together with his followers in Jerusalem on the New Year's Day of Marheshvan 5461 [1700]. He at once acquired a house in the Synagogue Court of the Ashkenazim, rented dwellings for his faithful ones and distributed money for them to live on. Most of them were sick after the great exertions of the journey. Conditions on the ship had been bad, and the space allowed for all of us together was far too small. On the day before the Sabbath our master went to the ritual bath, and then suddenly became sick. He prayed the Evening Prayer, but when he came home from the synagogue, he fell in a faint. Then he spoke deliriously, repeating verses from the Morning Prayer, and always repeating the same

The entire company consisted of more than thirteen hundred persons, several hundred of whom died on the way. Rabbi Judah himself died immediately on their arrival in Jerusalem, as Gedaliah relates.

Gedaliah's description of the voyage, and of life in Jerusalem at the time, is contained in *Shaaru Shelom Yerushalaim* ("Seek Ye the Peace of Jerusalem"), a small volume published in 1716. The present translation appears in *Roads to Zion*, an anthology of the reports of travelers to Palestine which is to be published in September by Schocken Books (as number 14 in the Schocken Library). The volume is edited by Kurt Wilhelm and translated by I. M. Lask. This selection appears here by courtesy of the publisher.—ED.

verses without regaining consciousness. Finally his son-in-law Rabbi Isaiah recited the Kiddush and then a physician was sent for.

In Jerusalem there was a wealthy Sephardic physician, who was as familiar with learning as with the science of healing. It is dangerous to go out into the streets of Jerusalem at night, even if it is only half an hour after sunset. The Turks do not permit it, and throw every Jew whom they find in the street at night into prison; and in addition they impose a money fine on him. Only in order to summon a doctor to a patient or a midwife to a woman in childbirth may a Jew enter the street at night. When the doctor came, he said that at the moment he could do but little, and that it would be necessary to wait another day.

On the Sabbath our master rose in the morning, washed himself, and conducted the Morning Prayer. Then he begged pardon of all for having disturbed their night's rest. He did not know what had happened to him in the evening. He only supposed that he had a sickness, but he already felt almost well. However, then came another fit of fainting.

This time his speech was paralyzed, and he could not utter another word. He passed away on Monday evening, without expressing a last wish. But there must be a last will and testament among his papers, for he often wrote of it.

He was buried on the same day, and many men and women of Jerusalem showed him the last honor and kindness. In the Synagogue Court the cantor of the Sephardim chanted Sephardic songs of mourning; and all those assembled wept bitterly at the sudden death of our master, and because they had not been accounted worthy to look upon his holy visage. After each verse of a song of mourning they smote themselves on the head and cried: Alas, alas! It was enough to melt a heart of stone.

Then the leading men among the Sephardim carried the bier to the graveyard on the Mount of Olives, where he was buried after the fashion of the Diaspora, not in a sepulchral chamber, as was formerly the custom here. After a year had elapsed, his wife passed away too and then his beloved little son. Both rest near him. They have gone on to eternity and have left us behind to sighing and sorrow.

IN THE late summer of the year, shortly before our arrival, a beginning was made at the building of the new synagogue and of forty dwellings for the poor. A magnificent House of Study containing many books was likewise built. In the courtyard are four plaster cisterns which do not lose a single drop of water, and in addition to providing the residents with water, provide also for the ritual bath. The cisterns hold the rain water, for there is no running water in Jerusalem. All the houses within the Synagogue Court, including the synagogue and the House of Study, are built of solid hewn stone, as well as the four cisterns which have a small opening on

top through which the bucket is let down. The water in the cisterns keeps as fresh as in a glass vessel.

These buildings consumed a great deal of money. The Turks in Jerusalem had to be heavily bribed before they permitted the building. Then the Jews of Jerusalem wished to construct the new synagogue on a larger scale than the old one, but the Turkish government permitted them to build it only as high as the previous building. So then they had to bribe the pashas heavily again, in order that they might approve a larger building.

Now there is a law in Jerusalem that while building is going on the pasha has to be paid five hundred lion thalers a year for three years. But as the synagogue had been built higher than the old one without the permission of the Sultan, another pasha came and wished to stop the building. So he also received five hundred lion thalers. Finally, a new pasha came from Constantinople to whom five hundred lion thalers had to be given. Thus the Jews were compelled to borrow money from the Turks at a high rate of interest.

The Jews pay taxes annually to the Sultan, two red gulden for every male person above the age of fifteen years. A poor man must pay at least one gulden. Every year a pasha from the Sultan appears in Jerusalem at the Passover season in order to collect the taxes. Anybody who does not pay is put in prison and the community chest must redeem him. This pasha usually remains in Jerusalem until the Feast of Weeks. Hence the poor folk hide in their houses as best as they can; but if the pasha catches them, the community head must pay for them. The pasha has his henchmen going about the street all day long to smell out the people who have not yet paid any tax. Anybody who has paid is given a receipt. If an official meets a man who has no receipt with him, he drags him off to the office of the pasha, where he must pay. That applies to the Ashkenazim the same as the Sephardim.

There are also many Christians dwelling in Jerusalem, almost more than Turks and Arabs. They also suffer greatly and must also pay taxes. Only the poor, the blind and the lame are exempt. Nevertheless the Turks demand it from them as well, and

nothing much can be done about it, for it is a harsh *galut*. However, on Sabbaths and festivals the tax collector may not press us. So on those days we walk the street without fear. But on weekdays it is different. The official may not enter a house to demand money, or make his way into the synagogue. But the villains place themselves at the synagogue entrance and woe to the man who leaves the synagogue and has no receipt with him! Sometimes the officials bribe the chief pasha of the Holy City, and in return receive permission to conduct their searches even in houses for two or three days. What do the poor folk do? Say the official searches in the houses of one street on Sunday, they hide themselves in the houses of the other street, and next day they hide themselves in the houses of the street in which the official made his search the day before.

At the time of the Feast of Weeks the pasha departs from Jerusalem in order to collect his taxes elsewhere. Hebron is the only place he does not go to, for that holy city enjoys tax redemption from the Sultan because the patriarchs are buried there in the cave of Machpelah. Neither Jews nor Christians pay taxes in Hebron. When the pasha arrives at Passover, the Jews bring him presents and bribes, but he receives even more than he would ordinarily; and next year another pasha arrives. In the Turkish empire the officials change from year to year, and the same tax collector is never sent to the same district for two consecutive years.

But let us return to our great worries, which the synagogue building brought about. Our debts press like a heavy yoke on our necks. We are continually taken into custody and before one debtor can be redeemed, another has already been detained. One scarcely dares to go out in the street, where to cap it all, the tax collectors lie in wait like wolves and lions to devour us.

WHEN we journeyed with our master to Jerusalem we passed through the whole of Germany, and were promised everywhere that we would receive regular support. At that time we believed that we could maintain ourselves in worthy fashion. But now we are oppressed with debts, and we have to give the money meant for our

sustenance to the Turks, so that they should not fling us into prison, for the prison is worst of all.

My family can allow itself only four lamb or goat feet for the Sabbath meal. These cost one Turkish para, which is about five Polish groschen. We cook the feet with peas or groats, but often enough we do not even have that for the Sabbath meal. We take the Sabbath hot-dish to be kept warm in the baker's oven, where there are between a hundred and two hundred pots usually standing together. On the Sabbath morning each one takes his own dish, for you recognize your property. Most people cook in copper pots. We poor folk from the Society of Rabbi Judah are the only ones who have iron vessels.

It is hard for us Ashkenazim to begin to trade here, for we lack knowledge of the languages. The Sephardic Jews talk Ladino, the Arabs talk Aramaic [*sic*] and the Turks Turkish. None of them understands German. And what should we deal with? There is indeed much wine in the Land of Israel, but Turks and Arabs drink neither wine nor brandy. If a Jew sells an Arab even a little wine or brandy and the Arab is seen drunk, then the Jew is imprisoned and beaten and has to pay a money fine. The Jews prepare wine and brandy for their own requirements, only we poor people of the Society of Rabbi Judah do not have enough money for this, and must buy wine from dealers. Often enough we must rest satisfied with the cheaper raisin wine. Brandy does not pass our lips even on the Sabbath, save when well-to-do Jews send us brandy as the tithe of the poor, in accordance with the law of Moses. The Sephardic Jews also engage but little in trade.

The roads of the country are endangered by brigands and the Turks themselves always travel in great caravans. Indeed, "the ways of Zion do mourn." Nobody comes in and nobody goes out. A caravan to Egypt is thirteen or fourteen days on the way, and the Jews must travel with the caravans even on the Sabbath, since they would not rest in order to wait for one Jew. For that reason the Sabbath law is abrogated on account of the danger to life, unless one can arrange with the ass driver to halt on the Sabbath. Mostly he

does not do so in any case, and therefore Jews go down to Egypt only in the most urgent of cases. In order to establish trade connections with Constantinople, one must cross the Great Sea, and the journey takes between two and three weeks. The company of Rabbi Judah was on the way for seventeen days, and when I departed from Jerusalem I was on the sea for fourteen weeks, since a storm was raging. Therefore only few merchants travel by sea.

A few Jews have grocery shops here. Some of them take a Turk as a partner in order to protect themselves against unfair treatment. There are also a couple of Jewish spice dealers in the non-Jewish markets. There are Jews here who are called Moghrabians [Moroccans], or "Moriscos" in their own tongue. They have a language of their own, but also understand Aramaic [i.e. Arabic]. They go dressed like the Arabs and it is scarcely possible to distinguish them, as the Arabs likewise follow the practice of leaving the beard uncut. These Moghrabians travel on their asses from place to place with spices and other things, and in return bring wheat and barley to Jerusalem. From this they make a meager living. If they, who know the languages of the country, live in poverty, what shall we poor Ashkenazim do here when we have to pass to and fro among the non-Jews as though we were dumb? If we buy something from an Arab, he shows us the price on his fingers and we have to answer on our fingers; so we become a laughingstock in their sight and cannot make a living.

JERUSALEM has two Jewish cemeteries, one from ancient times lying at a distance south of the town, and a new one to the east, on the slopes of the Mount of Olives. No gravestone can be recognized any more in the old cemetery, and there are many caves to be found there. There are no caves in the new graveyard, and the graves are dug out after our European fashion. Burial may not take place without the written authorization of the Turkish Kadi [Moslem religious judge] who is paid for this according to the wealth of the dead person. He gives permission for the burial of a poor man immediately and free of charge.

The earth in the cemetery is white, but the Mount is very stony and the grave must often be hewn out. Anybody who goes abroad from Jerusalem takes a little earth from the Mount of Olives with him. I too did the same in keeping with the words of the Psalm, "For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and love her dust" [Ps. 102:15].

The garments of the Turks are long like those of the Poles, but are multi-colored. Round the turban they wrap a cloth of cotton or silk. The Sephardim wear the same garb, but may not wrap their turbans round with green or white. The Jews may wear a white garment. The Sephardim wear a white undergarment, and wear over it a black or colored coat even on the Sabbath. The Ashkenazim go in gleaming white on the Sabbath, but the Sephardim wear white only on the Sabbath before the Ninth Day of Av. The Christians dress as in the kingdom of Poland. For the Turkish law prescribes that each nation should go in its own costume, in order to make the differences clear to see. There are also differences in footwear. The Jews wear blue and dark blue shoes, the Christians red, and yellow is reserved for the Turks.

The Arabs often wrong the Jews publicly. But if the Arab is a respectable man he will cause no injury to the Jew whom he meets in the street. The meeting with common people is often unpleasant for the Jews. We may not raise a hand against a Turk, nor against an Arab either, who has the same religion as the other. If one of them gives a Jew a blow, the Jew goes away cowering and does not dare to open his mouth, lest he receive worse blows.

That is the way the Sephardim behave who have grown accustomed to the situation. But the Ashkenazic Jews, for whom it is not yet customary to receive blows from Arabs, curse them if they know the language or leap upon them in fury, and then receive even more blows. But if a respectable Turk comes along, he scolds the Arab thoroughly and drives him away; or else he waits until the Jew has gone his way. The Christians must also suffer such indignities. If a Jew makes a Turk angry, then the latter beats him shamefully and dreadfully with his shoe, and nobody delivers the Jew from his hand. Nor is it

otherwise with the Christians. They find themselves under the same oppression, but they have a great deal of money which is sent to them from all over, and they bribe the Turks with it and keep them away. The Jews do not have much money, and it is much worse for them.

The bath in Jerusalem can be recommended. It has hot rooms and some that are less hot, and everybody can sit where he desires, the Jew as well. The furnace with which the bath is heated is in the cellar under the bathhouse. For fuel they use dry animal droppings and refuse.

WE HAVE seen something very evil. There are some new-fangled fools who came to the Land only a short time ago, and who wish to revive the old disease of the year 5426 [1661].* For these fools declare that the Divine Presence is no longer in exile since then, and that there is therefore no reason to mourn its homelessness any longer.

The hands of many worthy men have already been weakened by reason of our sins. Among them are pious folk and men of godly deeds who no longer lament the Exile of the Divine Presence. Must their conclusions once more be disproved, after it has become obvious to all how treacherous that movement was? Therefore we say in the words of King Solomon in the Book of Proverbs: "Answer not a fool, according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him" [Prov. 26:4]. For who does not know that we also shall return home with the return of the Divine Presence? Yet the Arabs will walk about our Holy Place and we are called the strangers to whom entry is for-

* Referring to the messianic movement of Sab-batai Zevi which reached its apogee in 1666.

bidden. Even if it were true that the Divine Presence has forsaken our Exile, that fact does not help us and our wounds are not yet healed.

Yet it is a rare delight to dwell in the Land of Israel, and "he who walks only four ells in the Land of Israel has a share in the everlasting life." When a scholar here goes to a place which he has never before visited, it is the custom for him to say: "I have gone a fresh four ells." Likewise the commandments which are only valid in the Land, as for example the provision that the priests shall be given the shoulder and the cheeks and the maw of all that is slaughtered, are still observed in the Land. I myself once slaughtered a lamb, and with God's aid I delivered his portion to a priest. We give heave-offerings and tithes of wine and brandy. One Friday I bought grapes in order to press out the juice for the Kiddush and then I was able to fulfil one commandment through fulfilling another—namely by giving a heave-offering and a tithe of the grapes. The prescriptions of the sabbatical year are likewise observed. The year before our arrival was such a sabbatical year. But I must refrain from describing in detail how we observed all these commandments. That would be too much for this little book, and when you come to the Land you will see it all, and do likewise.

Here we have no other occupation than to study and to pray by day and night. And as a reward may the words of the prophet Isaiah be fulfilled for us all speedily and in our days: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" [Isa. 35:10].

THE STUDY OF MAN

THE HUMAN ELEMENT IN HISTORY

Socio-Economic Facts Are Not the Whole Story

EDWARD N. SAVETH

THE Civil War is a theme of unfailing attraction to the American historian; and if the sales of such books as *Gone With the Wind* and *House Divided* are an index of popular appeal, it is no less fascinating to the layman. The deaths of the political giants Webster, Calhoun, and Clay after the Compromise of 1850; the spectacle of adolescent America at the mercy of the political mediocrities who dominated the scene in the decade preceding the war; bleeding Kansas and martyred John Brown; the fanaticism of

Abolitionists and anti-Abolitionists; the emergence of a national savior in the figure of Lincoln; the whole spectacle of American society turned against itself—all this is drama of irresistible appeal.

For the historian, moreover, the war itself has the advantage of a certain clarity: it was a modern war—almost what we have come to call a “total” war—without yet being a mechanized war. The purely military spectacle of the Civil War and the personalities of its generals—Lee, Sherman, Grant, Jackson—retain the vividness of life, while the still living leaders of the two World Wars are overshadowed by the very instruments they wielded.

It is by now a truism that each age writes its own history: and conversely trends in history writing may reflect—even foreshadow—changes in cultural attitudes and political thinking. Nowhere has this fact been more clearly exemplified than in the interpretation of the American Civil War, a conflict that stands at the center of almost every attempt to interpret the meaning of American civilization. EDWARD N. SAVETH, who analyzes here some recent historical writing on the Civil War—especially that latest monument in a distinguished tradition, Allan Nevins' *Ordeal of the Union*—sees a shift from the deterministic view (prevailing in recent years) which sees history as the product of impersonal economic and social facts and forces, to one in which the factors of human personality and choice are again seen as playing important roles. Dr. Saveth, a member of the staff of the American Jewish Committee, has been a frequent contributor to *COMMENTARY*. He was born in 1915, graduated from the College of the City of New York, and earned his doctorate at Columbia University. His book *American Historians and European Immigrants: 1875-1925* has just been published by Columbia University Press.

THE Civil War is the focus of a new history being written by Professor Allan Nevins of Columbia University, two volumes of which have recently been published (*Ordeal of the Union*; Scribner's, 1947). These volumes not only set out to capture the epoch in all its complexity and vitality; they mark the emergence of a new narrative synthesis in the writing of American history.

The great histories of America—those by Bancroft, Hildreth, McMaster, Rhodes, Schouler, Parkman, Henry Adams, Von Holst, Channing—have been narrative histories. They are all multi-volumed accounts, covering relatively large periods of history, and embracing definite views or conceptions of the historical process. This kind of narrative history was a relatively early development in American historiography, and was the most widely-used form until, in the 1890's, it was challenged by the monograph and a new conception of “objective,” scientific technique in historical research.

The new approach, which enshrined “scien-

tific method," was a product of the seminars of Bluntschli and Erdmannsdoeffler at Heidelberg and was introduced by Herbert Baxter Adams into the course of historical study at Johns Hopkins. Albert Bushnell Hart made it popular at Harvard, John W. Burgess at Columbia. The new scientific technique was concerned less with the grand sweep of history and its human significance and more with ascertaining and documenting factual information in relatively narrow fields of inquiry. Some of the older scholars were displeased with the new techniques, and complained that the monographs were really dry-as-dust affairs that held little interest for anyone except the specialist in a particular field. Edward Channing, on the other hand, himself the author of a narrative history, defended the innovators with the declaration that historians, under the new dispensation, were at last ceasing to copy from one another and were going to the sources.

This conception of history as scientific research was brought forth at a time when the scientific method was gaining prestige in America; the historians felt it necessary to justify the place of history among the sciences. There followed a sharp conflict between what W. Stull Holt describes as "two distinct and contradictory conceptions of scientific history." One is the belief that scientific history consists of a "search for facts alone, with no laws or generalizations and with a renunciation of all philosophy"; the other is the belief that there are historical laws or generalizations which may be scientifically formulated. It was the latter conception that finally showed itself vulnerable and had to give ground: too many of the interpretations spun by the historians in their vain search for the "key to history" were not only patently refutable, but, as in the case of H. B. Adams' "Teutonic hypothesis of the origin of democracy," produced no little mischief.

The victory of the monograph added much to our knowledge of men and events, but it discouraged the writing of narrative history. One decade of history-writing succeeded another, footnotes multiplied and sources grew, and the writing of narrative history seemed on its way to becoming a lost art. With the publication of Edward Channing's final volume in 1925, its day seemed finally over.

It is the special virtue of Professor Nevins' work that he attempts his revaluation of American history without throwing off the discipline of science. Perhaps more than any

other American historian, Nevins combines scientific technique in fact-finding and documentation, care and responsibility in drawing conclusions, with a powerful impulse toward intellectual synthesis and a strong sense of narrative style. Nevins, to be sure, is less of a stylist than Francis Parkman, for example, but it must be kept in mind that the harvest of monographs from the last fifty years makes Nevins in some degree the prisoner of his documentation: often, in historical writing, the very weight of the evidence seems to press down the nimblest of pens.

There is a more significant point of comparison between Professor Nevins' two volumes and the narrative American histories of former eras. The older writers, far more than the monographists, tended to introduce their personal preconceptions into their volumes, and these preconceptions are often, to the modern mind, surprisingly parochial. George Bancroft and James Schouler wrote as Democrats; Richard Hildreth, Henry Adams, and Hermann Eduard von Holst were strongly Federalist. Nevins is never partisan in this sense; he does not write to sustain the point of view of any political party or interested group, and none of the contending factions of the 1850's could find retrospective justification in his account. But his history is nevertheless expressive of a specific social and political orientation.

NEVINS might be roughly classified as a New Dealer with very firm anti-totalitarian convictions. He believes that if social progress is to be made at all it must be made slowly, and that recommendations for progress that are conditional upon a violent upheaval in the body of society accomplish no good purpose. At bottom, he is always concerned with the values of the individual life, rather than the impersonal march of progress and historical forces. Thus he is pragmatic, and a gradualist; he is interested in means as well as ends; and he is not made indifferent to human suffering by concentration on "historical necessities" and high political abstractions, whether of class or nation.

This point of view permeates his interpretation of the Civil War period. He does not like the extremists of that age any more than he admires extremist solutions of our contemporary problems. A combination of extremism and inept statesmanship, he contends,

brought on a war that might have been avoided, and the war itself contributed no more to the solution of the nation's problems than negotiation and intelligence could have accomplished without waste of blood and wealth. "The primary task of statesmanship in this era," he writes, "was to furnish a workable adjustment between the two sections, while offering strong inducements to the Southern people to regard their labor system not as static but evolutionary, and equal persuasions to the Northern people to assume a helpful rather than a scolding attitude."

Nevins is of course clearly conscious that he writes from a definite point of view, that he advances a "thesis," but his conception of the role of a thesis in historical writing is, too, a rather qualified one. He would agree that historians are human beings and that their ideas about history are themselves subject to historical forces. Yet he is steadfast in the opinion that the historian "should avoid bias in the sense of prejudice; he should court it in the sense of honest conviction. That conviction should follow, not precede, a study of the evidence and be formed during and by the historian's researches. . . ."

What Nevins asks for is a more intelligent and moderate use of the thesis in historical writing. His present volumes seem very successful in that respect, and precisely because of this they are not likely to become rapidly outdated. No one today takes seriously Brooks Adams' cyclical theory of history expressed in the *Law of Civilization and Decay* or Henry Adams' equally startling application of the second law of thermodynamics to history. Nor, for that matter, do historians today so unqualifiedly accept the economic interpretation of history as Beard did in 1913 when his *Economic Interpretation of the Constitution* was published. The most striking thesis has not always produced the best history (one senses already a growing unwillingness to take Toynbee seriously).

Nevins' view of the place of the thesis in writing history is much the same as that advanced by James Ford Rhodes, the first volume of whose *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850* appeared in 1893. Undoubtedly, Nevins' work will replace Rhodes' as the outstanding narrative history of the Civil War era, but Rhodes' earlier volumes are still very readable and

are again indicative of the enduring value of narrative history, when intelligently and not too one-sidedly written.

Rhodes found in the classical historians of Greece and Rome the virtues of "diligence, accuracy, love of truth, impartiality" (of course, they too had their biases); and he saw himself as "an earnest seeker after truth, trying to hold a judicial balance and to tell the story without prejudice." Rhodes also revealed heavy prejudices in some sections of his work. But on the whole he was moderately successful in his aspirations. And there is something of his undogmatic but judgmental temper in Nevins' praise of the compromisers of 1850 and his condemnation of those who sought to widen the North-South breach.

DESPITE the basic similarity of Nevins' and Rhodes' conceptions of history, there are important differences between the two works that are a measure of the advances made in historiography during the past fifty years. While both Rhodes and Nevins are by inclination political historians, Nevins' canvas is broader and his insight deeper in so far as he sees political history as developing out of a broad range of possibilities within the social matrix of the time. Rhodes would have been satisfied with Edward Augustus Freeman's conception of history as past politics; Nevins takes his text from John Richard Green: "Political history, to be intelligible and just, must be based on social history in its largest sense."

But social history, too, though it is in general an advance over the purely political and military narrative, has not escaped the blight of pedestrian "scholarship." Even John Bach McMaster, the father of American social history, whose *History of the People of the United States* represents a truly impressive achievement, frequently leads his reader in a maze of descriptive narration about widely disparate elements of social life. And there are volumes in the "American Life Series" that read like catalogs. Nevins' approach to social history is analytic rather than descriptive, and he uses his conception of the political issues to knot the entire fabric together. The result is that while the historical canvas is extremely broad, the picture itself is not without focus.

But his integration of social and political

phenomena does not lead Nevins to see the one as necessarily *determined* by the other. In a statement of his philosophy of history made some years ago in *The Gateway to History*, he admits that, as a result of the scientific approach, "we can today account by logical and orderly causes for much that formerly seemed mysterious." But, he adds, "when scientific research and interpretation have done their utmost," we must still take account of the "powerful role which fortune or accident plays in history."

This view joins with Nevins' political predispositions to strengthen his conviction that the Civil War was not inevitable, and could have been avoided had there not been a collapse of statesmanship in the middle and late 1850's. In thus placing blame for the outbreak of the conflict upon the shoulders of inept statesmen, Professor Nevins is applying to the pre-Civil War situation what he sees as the "decided element of truth" in the "Carlylean gospel" of the influence of personality on history. He is also taking issue with a very popular modern interpretation of history—especially popular in dealing with the Civil War.

THE idea of the Civil War as an "irrepressible conflict" has an interesting background in American historiography. In the 1870's, the German-born American historian Hermann Eduard von Holst, in his *Verfassung und Demokratie der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika*, pounced upon the theme of slavery, proclaimed it a moral abomination and in conflict with the "spirit of the age." Von Holst conceived of the Civil War as a bloody and inevitable expiation for a moral crime.

Von Holst's work served to counterbalance the Southern historical apologetics published by two statesmen of the Confederacy, Alexander H. Stephens and Jefferson Davis. Both of these men, sensitive to the accusation that they had fought a war in defense of the "peculiar institution" of human slavery, maintained that the fundamental issue in the war was a constitutional one—the North believing in a loose construction of the Federal Constitution and the South in a rigid construction. (Southern opponents of civil rights legislation still make use of this argument.)

These two views—that the Civil War was an inevitable product of the historical process, and that it was fought over a constitutional

issue—were synthesized by John W. Burgess, founder of the Columbia Graduate School of Political Science. Burgess was a student in Germany in the aftermath of that nation's unification; impressed with the Bismarckian spirit of "blood and iron," he believed that only the test of arms could decide the question of secession. As a proponent of integral nationalism, Burgess saw the Civil War as a necessary step in the emergence of American nationality.

More recently, the Civil War has been regarded as an irrepressible conflict on *economic* grounds. In the first half of the 19th century, so the story goes, there developed in the United States two opposing economic systems: the plantation-agrarian economy of the South, based upon slave labor, and the free-labor industrial system of the North. Inevitably these two divergent systems came into conflict as the plantation owners and the manufacturers struggled for control of the national government for the furtherance of their respective class interests. As Charles and Mary Beard have put it in *The Rise of American Civilization*: "When the modern student examines all the verbal disputes over the nature of the Union . . . he can hardly do otherwise than conclude that . . . the roots of the controversy lay . . . in divergent social forces, rather than varying degrees of righteousness and wisdom, or what romantic historians call 'the magnetism of great personalities.'"

Allied to the economic determinist views of the Beards was the Marxist interpretation, which stressed the operation of class interest in the motivation of the conflict. For example, James S. Allen's *Reconstruction: The Battle for Democracy* (1937) and Louis Hacker's "The American Civil War: Economic Aspects" (*Marxist Quarterly*, April-June, 1937) speak of a conflict between the slavocracy and the capitalists. This interpretation was sustained by the Marxist assumption that a dominant class will not surrender power peacefully. Actually, the assumption that only violence could dislodge the plantation aristocracy arises perhaps less from what Marx had to say than from the state of mind of those who applied his theories in a period which saw the triumph of Nazism in Germany, the consolidation of Stalinism in Russia, the rise of the Popular Front in France, and the Spanish Civil War. Inevitably, the issues of

the American past were interpreted in terms of the violence that made newspaper headlines in the 30's. In some of the accounts by Marxist historians, the Civil War became a struggle between "fascist" Southerners and a "progressive" coalition in the North and West. It became popular, also, to stress the elements of "realism" in the character of Lincoln, who thus became a historical justification for unprincipled "popular-front" tactics.

ALTHOUGH Marxist political dogmas were never very popular in the United States, the Marxist interpretation of the "irrepressible conflict," reinforced by the economic interpretation of the Beards, gained a considerable vogue. And historians of the 30's, armed with Marxian ideological concepts, resumed the ancient quest for a key to history—which in this case saw American capitalism as doomed, and American democracy as a mask for the material interests of the bourgeoisie, and interpreted the "meaning" of American history in terms of a future classless society that had not yet come into being. Many historians, to be sure, opposed this point of view, but they did not themselves have a philosophy of history to replace it.

In recent years, however, with the collapse of faith in Marxism and, even more important, with the growing sense that the values of American democracy represent one of the focuses of hope for a world in desperate straits, there has grown up a desire to gain from the study of history some new and more solid grasp of human possibilities and the human fate. This has given rise to greater emphasis upon the role of non-material forces in American history and a revival of narrative history, which, in contrast to the simplification of Marxism, is essentially a recognition of and response to the complexity of human behavior and history.

A psychological interpretation was first applied to the American Civil War in the late 30's by Avery Craven in an article entitled "The Coming of the War Between the States" (*Journal of Southern History*, August 1936), and by James G. Randall in his book *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (1937). Craven and Randall are far from ignoring the socio-economic background of the conflict, but they are convinced that the economic, political, and constitutional conflicts of the period neither made the war inevitable nor

even were its basic causes. Economic issues such as the tariff, internal improvements, ship subsidies, banking policies, could have been peacefully resolved as they were at earlier and later periods in our history. Even slavery as an economic system was doomed because its future was contingent upon the expansion of slavery into the territories where it could not be profitably maintained.

The real causes of the war, according to these writers, were such psychological factors as the zeal and fanaticism of reformers, intolerance, concepts of sectional honor, a sense of "mission" felt in both the North and the South. All these factors are judged by Craven and Randall to have been avoidable: had there been better means of communication and understanding among the sections of the country, had the majority of responsible men not been submerged under a flood of emotional oratory, a "blundering generation" need not have stumbled into war.

In thus removing the discussion, at least in part, from the realm of immutable socio-economic forces which manipulate men like puppets, Craven and Randall introduced imponderables and unpredictables into the historical situation. This was an important new element in the historiography of the Civil War in the post-Marxian era, deriving in part from the great stress placed in recent years upon the roles of propaganda and group emotions as social forces, and in part from the general rejection of Marxist rigidity.

Nevins' approach is the next logical step. Conscious of the point of view advanced by Craven and Randall, he goes a step beyond them in concentrating on the role of the politicians and statesmen upon whom rested the burden of decision for war or peace. The economic determinists and Marxists lost sight of the fact that it is not the socio-economic forces themselves which declare war, but the statesmen on whom these forces operate.

Nevins' is a different political history from that of the older historians such as Von Holst, Burgess, and even Rhodes. It is a political history which recognizes the influence of social and economic factors upon political behavior, and which is continually aware that the needs and anxieties of the day generate psychological forces that, in turn, act upon each individual. For Nevins, emotional and economic forces condition rather than determine political behavior; he recognizes that

within a given socio-economic and psychological framework there exists an area for individual action, and that there always exist alternative courses of action. He sees it as the duty of the individual historian, therefore, both to describe the course that was taken and to evaluate it in the light of the alternatives. Above all, this new history is less a political narrative than a study and critique of political behavior in a given milieu.

Illustrative of this approach is Nevins' account of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, introduced into the Senate by Stephen A. Douglas in 1854. This measure, which reopened the delicate question of slavery in the territories—an issue many believed settled by the Compromise of 1850—had momentous political effects. It revived the issues of 1848-50; it split the Democratic party; it completed the destruction of the Whig party; it paved the way for organizing the Republican party.

Nevins sees Douglas' action as the result of a complex of motives: "He had to think of the disorganized, discontented state of the Democratic party, lacking both leader and policy; the obligation resting upon 'Young America' for bold, trenchant action; his own legitimate ambition to become President; the demand of the Northwest for a Pacific railroad, with the consequent necessity for settling the Kansas-Nebraska country to furnish its future path; the fear of Missouri slaveholders lest they be surrounded on three sides by freesoil territory; Atchison's stubborn assertion that he would let Nebraska 'sink in hell' before he would see it organized on a basis of excluding slaveholders with their property; and Atchison's ability to rally a solid block of Southern Senators behind him. Douglas knew that, as the *Washington Union* remarked on January 5, 1854, 'this subject had been looked to with serious apprehensions, in consequence of the supposition that it might fearfully revive the slavery agitations.' But he believed, with Webster, that nature had closed this whole region to slavery. He recalled how easily Congress, in dealing with New Mexico and Utah in 1850, had evaded the slavery issue by leaving it to the future determination of the inhabitants. As chairman of the Committee on Territories, he had to move immediately and to move in a way that would maintain Democratic unity."

Moreover, once Douglas' logical motives are accounted for, Nevins is careful to add

that "men's motives are seldom simple, seldom completely logical, and seldom quite clear even to themselves. Douglas, his mind in Shakespeare's phrase a very opal, was a leader of extroverted personality, of rapid decisions and headlong action, and of pronounced love of combat In this particular situation, pure impulse doubtless played a large part in his course."

More than anything else, it is this broad comprehension of the complexity of human motives that sets Nevins' narrative apart from earlier treatment of political history. Although, according to Nevins, "it could be said that circumstances rather than Douglas were at fault" in unleashing the forces that made for war, he also suggests the possibility of another course of action. Douglas did not appreciate the full tidal force of the slavery issue, and "he did not remember that it is the essence of democratic government that a temporary majority shall not abuse its power. . . ." Nevins concludes: "Had Douglas busied himself in 1850-53 battling for a clear understanding and acceptance of popular sovereignty . . . and had he consistently asserted that the restriction of 1820 was dead, his course would have been unexceptionable. But to seize victory for his 'principle' by a sudden coup when circumstances favored it appeared to many Americans indefensible."

LOOKING back from this latest work to the three-quarters of a century of Civil War historiography that preceded it, one is struck by the essential logic of the progression that has taken us from the morally inexorable determinism of Von Holst and Burgess, through the materialist determinism of the Marxists, to the moderate and carefully responsible eclecticism of Professor Nevins, who reexamines the period in terms of its leading personalities and their political choices: the politician as actor, seen against the full backdrop of his time. For Nevins, historical forces "determine" only the situation in which men must act; within that situation there is some possibility of choice.

Professor Nevins' volumes are something more than a new history of the American Civil War. They offer Americans of today what they most need: a renewed sense of the complexity of human behavior and a reaffirmation of the ultimate importance of the acting, thinking, *choosing* human being.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Troubles of a Translator

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In explaining the large percentage of Hebrew words in Yiddish, Maurice Samuel says in his article (in the June COMMENTARY) that "one of the functions of Yiddish, therefore one of the sources of its beauty, is—or was—precisely this teaching of Hebrew." He may be right insofar as he has in mind the authors of works written in "classic" Yiddish, who probably overloaded their language with Hebrew as part of their "hidden policy" (to borrow a phrase from Mr. Samuel) aiming at the conservation of the language of the prophets. But the whole tenor of the article conveys the idea that the introduction of these words of a dead language into the living speech of the Jewish masses in the ghetto was part of a conscious process which began in a distant past and preceded the efforts of the more or less modern Yiddish writers whom he mentions. This idea is expressed in the subtitle of his article ("The 'Hidden Policy' of the Language").

Mr. Samuel thus attributes a "higher" purpose to a linguistic-sociological phenomenon which is quite common. The *Kundensprache*, i.e. the slang of the predominantly "Aryan" tramps and hobos of pre-Nazi Germany (I don't know what changes have occurred since World War I), was full of Hebrew terms adopted from the Yiddish for the obvious purpose of making their speech unintelligible to the surrounding hostile world. There is not the slightest doubt that the introduction of Hebrew into the original medieval Rhenish-German dialect which sired the Yiddish, served the same purpose, which apparently was not fully attained by the "technique of gesture and intonation," as suggested by Mr. Samuel.

It is a pity that Mr. Samuel, perhaps because of his Rumanian background, neglects the role of the Slavic ingredients in Yiddish in his exceedingly informative and amusing article. There are quite a number of Polish words in Yiddish—I don't have the exact percentage at hand—and some of its "German" words, such as *sich begehnen* (to do without) are mere "loan-translations" from Polish and

have no meaning whatsoever in German, modern or medieval. Moreover, entire phrases, such as *Gott die neshomeh shuldig*, or *off vos die velt shteht*—both of these quoted by Mr. Samuel—are literal translations of Polish idioms. One might argue, of course, that the Poles could have taken them from the Jews; but the fact is that Yiddish borrowings from Polish are much more numerous than the other way around.

It is not my intention to disparage Yiddish as a "jargon," for so is English for that matter. I merely resent excessive enthusiasm. I love my grandmother's speech and regret that its literature is not available in Latin script.

MAX NOMAD

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Maurice Samuel in discussing the "wearing of the *sheitel* or wig" in his article "Who Can Translate Yiddish?" says: "There is absolutely no mention of such a law in Talmudic literature."

I refer Mr. Samuel to Talmudic Tractate *Ketuboth* 72A in the Mishnah, which says: "These are they that are put away without their Ketubah: a wife that transgresses the law of Moses and Jewish custom. . . . And what conduct is such that transgresses Jewish custom? If she goes out with her hair unbound." (See also *Even Haezer* 15:2.)

RABBI MORRIS BEKRITSKY

Portland, Maine

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I should like to correct Maurice Samuel's casual assumption concerning the *sheitel* (COMMENTARY, June 1947, page 507). Surely Samuel (or his informant, Dubnow, he "believes") cannot seriously think that the highly improbable exaction of a highly mythical *jus primae noctis* (on this score, may I imitate Samuel's vague references and suggest that you consult Lang, Westermarck, and Frazer on the subject) was responsible for the *sheitel*! Parenthetically one wonders how the indigent bride who was obliged to sell her hair to the wigmaker in order to redeem the first night from the lord of the

manor, was thereafter able to afford the higher price of a wig to cover her shorn head—for certainly the finished product brought a larger sum than the raw material, unless medieval wig-makers worked on a very different margin of profit.

While the weight of the evidence shows that the *jus primae noctis* was chiefly a negative decree (involving payment rather than actual act), it existed even as such chiefly in the early Middle Ages—the one document (and that one suspect) which presents it actually in action is dated 1302—and probably only in parts of France, and possibly also in a few centers in Italy and Germany, but certainly nowhere else. The *sheitel*, however, is a comparatively recent innovation and at the time a radical one (Salo W. Baron, *The Jewish Community*, vol. III, page 203). Samuel Judah Katzenellenbogen of the 16th century (*Derashoth*, quoted in N. Bruells, *Jahrbuecher fuer juedische Geschichte u. Literatur*, viii, 51) protested against nuns who continued to cover their shorn locks with a veil, while Jacob Emden in the following century (Baron, *op. cit.*) again deplored the custom. The original custom (referred to in *Mishnah Ketuboth*, vii, 6 and elsewhere as a “Jewish ordinance”) involved only the covering of the locks. The coifed head was as characteristic of the Jewish matron as, centuries later, it was of the Quaker women or, even today, of the Amish folk. (Tertullian, *De cor.* iv, described it: *Apud Iudaeos tam sollene est feminis eorum velamen capitis ut inde noscantur.*)

We know that the shearing of the tresses appears in the marital customs of people other than the Jews (Asiatic as well as European)—we have a vestige of this rite, for instance, in the Asiatic-inspired Roman marital custom of parting the bride’s hair with a knife (see Ovid’s *Fasti* in Frazer’s edition). We know that shaving of the head appears in some of the erotic rites of the worship of Adonis where it is a ransom for promiscuous sexual intercourse (hence, probably, Dubnow’s (?) association of the *sheitel* with a ransom for the lord’s right to the first night), but this was not the defloration rite involved in the principle of the *jus primae noctis*, but an annual injunction upon all women married or single who worshiped Adonis (e.g. Hartland, *Ritual and Belief*, pages 266ff). The idea that evil spirits lurked in the hair of women was responsible for the various rites of other religions involving the cutting of the hair; but although there is evidence that vestigial theories of demonic possession inspired the Jewish ordinance concerning the head-covering (as it did Paul’s ruling for Christian women, Conybeare, *JQR*, 1895-6, page 579),

among the Jews the actual cutting of the tresses was more a matter of comfort or of sanitation than of ritual, and the *sheitel* purely a matter of vanity.

Maurice Samuel’s unfortunate carelessness marks also his discussion of Yiddish style. Perhaps it is fussy pedanticism to require present-day writers to know the technicalities of their craft, but I do not think so. The easy style which is the fetish of today’s prose is as much a product of rhetorical labor as the majestic style of, let us say, Ruskin, Milton, or Cicero. Zangwill’s writings are no less easy and probably far more forceful because he was a thorough rhetorician. To return to the point, the Yiddish classical style with its use of two words where one should suffice, is not derived from practical necessity as Samuel (bolstered by Gray’s discussion of “archaic English”) would have us think. The English of the 16th-century translation of the Book of Common Prayer was not the English of the early Norman conquest. The need to explain a Norman word by a Saxon word was far from urgent. The double use there was stylistic rather than practical. So also is it largely a matter of style in the writings of our Yiddish classicists.

Hendiadys (the coupling of two synonymous nouns, adjectives, etc.) has always been a familiar device in prose style. Characteristic of the majestic style of Cicero, it also lends itself to effective use in English and was a favorite figure of the pulpit orators of the 17th and 18th centuries. The translators of the English Bible reproduced the slow rhythm of the Hebrew largely by means of an extensive use of hendiadys. What more logical than to assume that the Yiddish classical writers made use of this typical rhetorical figure for rhetorical purposes, and how much more suitable in an English translation to make use of the rich variety the English language affords.

ROSE ROSENHOHN JACOBS
East Orange, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Maurice Samuel may know something about Yiddish but he makes some absurd statements in his article in your June issue, concerning “the history of the English language.” He cites several pairs of words from the Book of Common Prayer with the explanation that they are to be accounted for by “the need which once existed to make public utterance intelligible both to speakers of Anglo-Saxon and of Norman-French during the period of the fusion of the two languages.” Three of his examples are taken from the exhortation in the Order for Morning (and Evening) Prayer. As this exhortation was probably written by Cranmer and

was certainly not introduced into the Prayer Book before 1552, the absurdity of Mr. Samuel's explanation is, I think, obvious.

W. EDWIN COLLIER
Philadelphia Ethical Society

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Maurice Samuel's article on translating Yiddish permits us a glimpse into a fascinating workshop.

Touching all too briefly on the many facets of his infinite problem he leaves us with a number of questions. . . .

The once overrated closeness of German and Yiddish has been recently unduly contested in order to break, as A. A. Roback puts it, "the conspiracy of silence against Yiddish." The recent incident of an American plane crashing in the Swiss Alps should be remembered. The parental Yiddish of an American Jewish officer was at once understood by the Swiss herders although they spoke only the Alemanic dialect.

It is fortunate that theoretical objections do not stop the incessant flow of translation. Did not Yiddish itself assert its literary start by its abundant translations, as every revived language has done? . . .

Is it not a sign of vitality that we have close to one hundred *Faust* translations alone in English? . . . Can we not be proud that during the decade of Nazi horror two translations of *Faust* were published in Hebrew?

At this turn of our history, such labors of love in the marketplace of ideas are in danger. But nothing shows better the life of a language than the meeting and clash of ideas in the translator's workshop. . . .

RICHARD D. LOEWENBERG
Bakersfield, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I suppose a lot of people have called or written to praise the Maurice Samuel piece. Count me among them.

MORTON WISHENGRAD
White Plains, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am grateful to your correspondents who have taken the trouble to comment on my article "Who Can Translate Yiddish?"—and particularly to Mrs. Jacobs, whose impressive erudition comes to the support of a main assumption of mine while exposing the "carelessness" of a minor assumption. I was concerned with the fact that the wearing of the *sheitel* by Jewish married women was a late custom of non-Jewish origin. Mrs. Jacobs' cataract of quotations has carried my thesis beyond the possibility of refutation. Whether

it is "careless" to cite Dubnow (?) from memory on a secondary point in an article taken from a book which does not pretend to scholarship is perhaps debatable; definitely so is Mrs. Jacobs' extension of the stricture to my discussion of "dittology" in the classic Yiddish, concerning which more below. And quite unacceptable is her parenthetical excursus on the economics of bridal chastity. The average head of hair of a young woman provides enough raw material for at least two or three *sheitels*. Here I wish to point out that Rabbi Bekritsky, too, seems to be supporting rather than contradicting my main thesis. That a woman was forbidden, in Tannaitic times, to go out with her hair unbound, seems to imply that she hadn't cut it off.

To return to the matter of "dittology": I did my best to point out the differences and resemblances between this phenomenon as it occurs in Yiddish and as it occurs in English. I do not think Mr. Collier's objection is valid. Certainly the Book of Common Prayer belongs to the 16th century. But legal documents of our own time still say "aid and abet," "foregather and assemble." The habit was acquired long before Cranmer's time and lingers into our own. Mrs. Jacobs makes the same objection, and adds that hendiadys "has always been a familiar device in prose style." But the Yiddish dittology is not hendiadys, for it is accompanied in all the Yiddish classicists by whole chunks of Hebrew quotations and parallel Germanic-origin Yiddish translations. And a special branch of humor in their style consists of deliberate mistranslation (cf. Tevye the Dairyman) implying a knowledge of Hebrew in the reader (who was not for that reason assumed to be exceptionally learned). Neither Mrs. Jacobs nor Mr. Nomad could explain, from their points of view, why the Hebrew words in Yiddish have so obstinately retained their difficult original orthography. If we take the sum total of the features of Yiddish dittology, we (or at least I) find them explicable only on the basis of a national policy, perhaps never formulated, but none the less justified by the historic issue. Hebrew *has* been revived; Erse has not. Toynbee, whom I always find impressive on subjects in which my ignorance is complete, lumps the Zionists, in this matter, with the Norwegians, the Irish, the Ottoman Turks, and the Greeks (*A Study of History*, abridgement by D. C. Somervell, page 508; I could make this the real thing by going to the extended text), and in this commits the same error, I believe, as the correspondents above-mentioned.

MAURICE SAMUEL
New York City

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Portrait of the American

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE: A STUDY IN NATIONAL CHARACTER. By GEOFFREY GORER. New York, Norton, 1948. 246 pp. \$3.00.

Reviewed by DAVID T. BAZELON

GEOFFREY GORER, a young British cultural anthropologist, has lived in the United States for seven years, has studied with Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, and John Dollard, has worked on projects of the Rockefeller Foundation and the Yale Institute of Human Relations, and has served as liaison in Washington for one of his country's wartime missions. Mr. Gorer's attempt at a description of us Americans is based more on sensitive observation and a point of view called "psychocultural" than on any exhaustive scientific study, although he has, it is true, utilized opinion polls, case histories, and previous sociological studies. Almost as interesting as the statements and conclusions contained in this excellent book—and certainly more important and far-reaching—is this strange hybrid "psychocultural" method itself, containing as it does elements of anthropology, psychoanalysis, political awareness, news-reporting, and—most important of all—literature. (Without some dosage of literary sensibility, no matter how crude or unencouraged, I doubt whether the concepts and images produced by the psychocultural method could be held together in any seeming order.)

THE primary and recurrent theme of *The American People* is stated in the first chapter, "Europe and the Rejected Father." Mr. Gorer believes that the whole question of authority in America is bound up with the impulse toward "Americanization" of the children of immigrants, which involved a rejection of the European father and his European ways as a hindrance in adjusting to the new American world. From this initial rejection are derived

two fundamental characteristics of the American people: a competitive, almost anarchic egalitarianism, and the dominance of the female and female influences in the area of ideals. While the family retains its outward form of paternalistic authority in America, its actual content has been altered drastically. Almost by default, moral training was put in the hands of the mother and the female school-teacher; the latter is extremely important because she teaches Americanism first and only secondarily imparts "knowledge." Mr. Gorer goes so far as to suggest that the American world of "things," including business and much of politics, has come to be governed by the non-ethics of masculine competitiveness, while the world of personal relations is left as the proper province of female morality. "The clinging mother is the great emotional menace in American psychological life, the counterpart of the heavy domineering father in England and on the Continent."

From this point on it is impossible to give a systematic outline of *The American People*. The book does not march along to the sound of scientific drums; it ebbs and flows like fiction, and has a plot and characters—the former being the psychocultural method, the latter the initial assumptions involved in the rejection of the European father. There are many enthralling scenes and startling incidents in *The American People*. But I can only try to indicate a little of its rich suggestiveness.

Middle-aged clubwomen are perhaps the largest politically active group in America, and are extremely influential. Mr. Gorer suggests that the fate of Western civilization may lie in their hands. . . . "Most American babies experience acute hunger"—because of rigid adherence to arbitrary feeding schedules. Since there is no traditional way of raising a child in America, and since the child and the future he represents lie at the very center of American life, the mother suffers from anxiety that creates an obsession with "scientific" systems of child-raising (these are changed every gen-

eration). Mr. Gorer makes the superb statement that Americans "identify with their children rather than with their parents"—which, as a single line, equals some of the great moments of art.

The concept of the "sissy" also plays a great role in our life, and is uniquely American. Its corollary is the notion of the "regular guy." Here, perhaps because of my lack of a detached view, I cannot help but think that Mr. Gorer misses much of the value of these concepts—he sees them purely as the means of egalitarian tyranny. (Just as, in other places, his European view debars him from full appreciation of the American's detachment from his government, and his admirable natural scepticism; also Mr. Gorer is way off the mark in his description of the wisecrack.)

The American system of "dating" exists in no other primitive or civilized society, and is likened to a mixture of chess and social dancing. It uses all the gestures of courting and love-making in a competitive game of status. Meanwhile love and success are deeply connected in America, since love here is asymmetrical, i.e. "to be loved it is not necessary to love in return, but rather to be worthy of love."—But these are only slight indications of the content of *The American People*: it is better to read the book and be convinced or angered by this young Englishman himself.

IN A sense, this psychocultural approach of Mr. Gorer's (it was first used to describe American character, he tells us, by Margaret Mead in *And Keep Your Powder Dry*) is the present result of the great cultural tendency that produced the "objective" naturalistic novel. I would suggest that this approach appears, potentially, capable of doing better what that kind of novel wants to do. Not that *The American People* is superior, or even strictly comparable, to Zola's *Germinal*, Dreiser's *Copperhead* books, or Farrell's *Studs Lonigan*. Gorer has much to learn from them, but they in turn would have profited considerably from his knowledge and method. It is possible that in the far future the tendency on the crest of which Gorer now rides may succeed in displacing the novel entirely. As it is, *The American People* is much more interesting than most novels.

Mr. Gorer's method does not describe "conduct" or "being"; it describes what it can assimilate in connection with conduct and being.

Another method, equally good, might paint a quite contradictory picture. To this extent his work is similar to that of the novelist or critic, and is, strictly speaking, unscientific. For example, there is frequent confusion between analogy and cause in his writing (which, as a matter of fact, is characteristic of much psychoanalytic work). This is a grievous error in science, but not nearly so much so in literature. (Is it science's business to assign significance to the fact that businessmen prefer poker while workers more often shoot craps? Or to point out that the socially approved position of the American urban windowshade is halfway up, halfway down?)

In general one can say that sociology lies in the mid-ground between politics and literature (which some centuries ago, before the birth of sociology, were not nearly so much separated as they are now). To realize themselves, each of the two disciplines must fructify the other. For sociology this means, not to ignore values and their class-struggle context, on the one hand, or the throbbing individual on the other. Mr. Gorer describes the *patterns* that make up the American character, but it is implicit (and felt and assumed by the reader) that he is describing American character itself, i.e. the peculiar *life* lived here. But the pattern is never equal to the life; and when it is not sufficiently informed by the latter, it is inaccurate—scientifically inaccurate.

And in truth what Mr. Gorer misses in his description of the American character is the importance of the great "underworld" of our existence, which is the consequence of the fact that the "American way of life" is very much *in process*—dynamic and chaotic process, moreover. The importance of the patterns he describes is *at least* matched by the fact that nobody here fully believes in them. The classical mode in literature also emphasized overall patterns, the character-type rather than the individual instance. But as society became more heterogeneous, the best talents sought new modes which would be more inclusive of the variousness and the *quick* of life. Science too must consider the heterogeneous "underworld" (and let no one think that psychoanalysis does this adequately).

If I make the statement that the most important events taking place in America today are the daydreams of the workers at their machines, is that a political, a sociological, or a literary statement?

The Real King Solomon

KING SOLOMON. By FREDERIC THIEBERGER. London, East and West Library, 1947. 313 pp. 12s. 6d.

Reviewed by THEODOR H. GASTER

THANKS to the progress of archaeology, it is becoming increasingly possible to fit the narratives of the Bible into their true historical context and to read the scriptural sagas against the background of events. In the process, a number of biblical figures who have hitherto been swathed in the wrappings of legend at last emerge as real personalities. One such figure is that of King Solomon, who is now transformed from a mere romantic exemplar of wisdom into a shrewd and discerning political administrator whose exploits and activities were informed by a consistent regard for the exigencies of his day.

The object of Frederic Thieberger's book is to present the career of the Israelite monarch in the light of our increased knowledge and wider perspective. In ten absorbing chapters he surveys Solomon's accomplishments in the organization of the state, the mobilization of its defenses, the extension of its trade, and the stabilization of its religion; and he discusses also the literary legacy of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs traditionally associated with Solomon's name. Thieberger's central thesis is that Solomon was animated throughout by the desire to found a national polity on the basis of monotheism. It was this, he thinks, that inspired his departures from Ancient Near Eastern norms in the fields of cult and law and in many other aspects of his administration. The building of the Temple, for example, had as its main objective the welding together of the people under a transcendental spiritual authority, while the establishment of a court of justice on the Temple Hill was designed to give expression to the religious basis of legislation. On the purely political side, Thieberger skillfully works into the picture Solomon's marriage to the daughter of the Egyptian Pharaoh, his acquisition of the important Deity of Gezer as part of the dowry, and—facts revealed by recent archaeological discoveries—his establishment of a stable for war-horses at Megiddo and of a mercantile port at Ezion Geber on the Gulf of Akaba.

In view of its many excellences, it is the

more unfortunate that the author has chosen to mar his presentation by hingeing it constantly upon quasi-philosophic generalizations of a highly questionable character, and by a somewhat cavalier treatment of historical facts in the interests of an apologetic Israelite chauvinism. His statement, for example, that "a polytheistic mentality cannot rise to a fully mature ethical system of justice" because it lacks "the motivating belief in the sanctity of human life and the equality of all men" overlooks the fact that the latter is by no means the only possible source of ethics. It also ignores the achievements of Egyptian gnomists on the one hand and of Plato on the other in formulating what can scarcely be described as immature theories of justice. Similarly, when the author asserts sweepingly that, as a general rule, the "origin of a folk-song is not traceable, because it is not the creation of a single man," he comes up against the opinion of many competent folklorists that the theory of group authorship (as distinct from mere folk elaboration) is untenable. Again, the contention that the Solomonic authorship of the Book of Proverbs must represent a tradition current for centuries before the book was adopted into the canon, because "it would have been vain for anyone at that time to use Solomon's name merely in order to smuggle a book" into the corpus of Scripture, loses sight of the fact that a tradition to the effect that Solomon "composed proverbs" might in itself have been sufficient for the biblical book to be subsequently attributed to him.

The book also suffers from many misstatements of fact. Some of these are grotesque. It is stated, for instance, that the Israelites called the Phoenicians by the name of Kenites—whereby two entirely different peoples are confused. It is said also that the earliest monument of an alphabetical script is the inscription on the sarcophagus of Ahiiram of Byblus, dating about 1000 B.C.E. This overlooks the earlier alphabetic inscriptions from Tell Duwier, Shechem, and Gezer, the monuments from Serabit (in Sinai), and the Ras Shamra texts. The existence of these documents also invalidates the author's contention that the Canaanites must have learned the alphabet from the Israelites, for they are anterior in date to the Israelitic invasion. Again, when Thieberger asserts that "only in Israel [do] we find poems that are alphabetically composed," he forgets that alphabetic acrostics have also been detected in Assyrian hymns; and when he says

that the celebrated inscription of King Mesha of Moab "confirms" the scriptural narrative in the First Book of Kings, he slurs over a number of perplexing differences and seeming contradictions between the two accounts.

An overstrained tendency towards apologetics also leads the author to adopt questionable etymologies in support of his central thesis and likewise to underestimate the extent of Canaanite influence upon Israel. Thus, it is scarcely possible to derive the divine name YHWH ("Jehovah") from the Hebrew verb *h-y-h*/*h-w-h*, in the sense of "He will be," and at the same time accept that as its original form; for the fact is that in the Mosaic age "He will be" would have been expressed by the archaic *yhw-y*, not by the "modern" *yhw-h*. Similarly, the categorical denial that the conception of Yahweh was influenced by that of the Canaanite storm-god Hadad overlooks the fact that one of the standard epithets of the latter, viz. "Rider upon the Clouds," is actually applied to the former in Psalm 68 and that Psalm 29 is simply a Yahwization of an early hymn to Hadad—as H. L. Ginsberg and the present reviewer have independently shown.

Again, when Thieberger suggests that Koheleth, the Hebrew name for Ecclesiastes, means "a person who summons or presides over an assembly or school of wise men" and that the book is therefore the product of such a school, he forgets that in biblical usage the word *kehillah* denotes a *convocation* called together *ad hoc*, rather than a *stative assembly*, such as a school of sages would be.

These criticisms, however, should not impair appreciation of a work which in general conception and execution shows remarkable insight, penetration, and erudition. It is a pity only that the author's enthusiasm has not infrequently overridden sound judgment.

The Great Prisoner

WRITINGS AND SPEECHES OF EUGENE V.

DEBS. With an introduction by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. New York, Hermitage Press, 1948. 484 pp. \$4.00.

Reviewed by JAMES RORTY

MR. SCHLESINGER has performed a valuable service by making available, in the form of

well-selected specimens of Eugene V. Debs' own writing and speeches, the substance on which the legend of the Great Socialist and Great Prisoner is based.

The substance is better than the legend—truer, more human, clearer, and above all more useable as a touchstone for the appraisal of contemporary political tendencies and personalities. From youth to old age, the logic of Debs' fortunately simple character seems to have unwound without snarls, or any kind of moral failure or confusion, in a kind of spiritual Horatio Alger sequence. Pluck and luck made a great American out of Gene Debs, and an amazingly successful one, before he was dead. This book, with its chronologically arranged self-documentation of the life, enables us to see the growth of that greatness, and to learn from it.

At thirty-nine Debs had the great good fortune to be clapped into jail for six months. (An invaluable experience, which should be part of the education of every American; twenty-four hours in an average American jail is enough to convince any intelligent person that what we call our civilization is a gross failure, a contemptible fraud.) It happened in 1894, when Grover Cleveland broke the Pullman strike by sending federal troops into Illinois over the protest of Governor Altgeld. Federal judges jailed Debs, the president of the American Railway Union, for contempt of court.

He served his sentence in a filthy county jail in Woodstock, Illinois, and being an honest, logical, and courageous person, he came out of jail a Socialist.

Up to that time Debs had been a trade unionist pure and simple. "No shadow of a system fell athwart my pathway," he writes. "No thought of ending wage-misery. I was too deeply absorbed in perfecting wage-servitude."

The Pullman strike seemed won, when "there was delivered from wholly unexpected quarters a swift succession of blows that blinded me for an instant and then opened wide my eyes—and in the gleam of every bayonet and the flash of every rifle the class struggle was revealed.... Injunctions flew thick and fast, arrests followed, and our office was sacked, torn out and nailed up by the 'lawful authorities' of the federal government.... I found myself in Cook County Jail at Chicago with the whole press screaming conspiracy, treason and murder...."

For the next thirty years, in jail and out—he was to occupy three county jails, one state prison, and one federal penitentiary, for a total of almost four years—Debs functioned as a Socialist agitator. His revelation was too simple, and his platform rhetoric was of the period—that is to say execrable, and studied with quotations from bad poems. Now and then, in a tight tactical spot, he resorted to rationalizations that seem a bit strained: for example, we find him explaining laboriously that his IWW friends Bill Haywood and Frank Bohn didn't mean what they obviously did mean when they wrote that the class-conscious worker "retains absolutely no respect for the property 'rights' of the profit takers. The present laws of property are made by and for the capitalists. Therefore he does not hesitate to break them." (Debs himself flatly repudiated "direct action.")

But for the most part Debs remained securely himself, getting better and better in word and deed as he went along: the devoted organizer and editor who gave eighteen hours a day and most of his salary as city clerk to building up the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen; the radical who was also the most loved and respected citizen of Terre Haute, Indiana; the candidate for president who polled a million Socialist votes in 1912; the war resister who stood by his jailed comrades, was jailed himself after the Armistice, and was kept jailed by the self-righteous Wilson, who had to be taught humanity by Harding.

By the time Debs reached Atlanta there was a light around his shoulders for all men to see. The prisoners saw it, and when Debs, nominated while in prison, did not win the 1920 election, they were genuinely surprised; they could not understand how the people could fail to choose so great a man. Later, when Debs describes his release from prison in *Walls and Bars*, his only book, the rhetorical flowers are gone from his style:

"The last inmate I clasped hands with was a Negro serving a life sentence. As the poor fellow stood before me sobbing I literally saw the prison in tears.

"For a moment I was rooted to the spot and shaken with emotion. I felt as if I was deserting my friends and a sense of guilt gripped my conscience.

"I could see their anxious eyes peering at me from all directions, and how could I turn my back on them and leave them there!

They wanted me to go, to join my family, to have my liberty, while the impulse seized me to stay with them until we could walk out of the barred cells together into the sunlight of the outer world...."

This was the kind and gallant man who made Socialists of us before World War I. I don't think we would have listened to a Henry Wallace. And I am sure that Gene, seeing the bars through which the self-imprisoned Wallace peers out at the world, would have felt for him chiefly compassion.

The Poet in America

HART CRANE: A BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL STUDY. By BROM WEBER. New York, The Bodley Press, 1948. 424 pp. \$4.50.

Reviewed by MAURICE ENGLISH

THE best reason for being interested in Hart Crane is that he was a superb lyric poet, one of the most gifted America has produced. But he can also be studied for another reason. Crane supersedes all earlier figures as the most painful symbol of the tragedy of the artist in America. The period of the 20's simultaneously stimulated and stifled American culture to an exceptional degree, and the higher the potential achievement, the more menacing the environment proved to be. This is well understood in the case of those poets of the period who attempted to save themselves by exile; it is easier to see Crane's as simply a morbid personal tragedy, without reckoning how much the period contributed to his brief exaltations, confusion, and final total estrangement.

One can readily agree that the personality which flowered out of Crane's childhood might have had a fatal ending in any period. But the forces in our society which were most inimical to him—among them the familiar brutal commercialism and also the rootless religiosity—were those which worked on him grossly from his first beginnings. The point about Crane in relation to his time is that he was impelled to destroy himself *before* he was burned out as a writer; he was still a great poet a few weeks before his suicide, when he completed "The Broken Tower." From this viewpoint, the figures who offer the most illuminating comparisons with Crane are not his contemporaries, but two other *poètes maudits*: Poe and Rimbaud.

CRANE'S American "ancestor," despite the pathos of his life, and despite also the comparative inferiority of his talent as a poet, had a "career"; in his time it was still less difficult than in ours for a poet to exist, however grimly, as a man of letters. The fact that Poe's career was socially possible has aesthetic importance: it made possible a relatively rounded and complete literary work. The 20's denied Crane even this, and his inability to grub a living is less important than his sense of total estrangement from the dominant culture of New York.

The extremity of this estrangement becomes clearer when one compares Crane's life and work with Rimbaud's. The parallel between them goes far beyond the American's conscious intention: "For the Marriage of Faustus and Helen" stands at the same point in his work as "Le Bateau Ivre" does in Rimbaud's—but it is significantly weaker in coherence and structure at the same time that it is more ambitious. Crane's "Voyages," in which Eros goes on his hallucinated passage to a sea-burial, occupy, together with some companion pieces, a place comparable to the *Illuminations*. But there—at the point where Rimbaud pushed on to sum up his experience in a masterpiece—the parallel breaks off. In *The Bridge*, Crane attempted to express the opposite of what he had come to believe, and his epic collapsed in rhetoric. He never emerged intact from his season in hell, and it was left for Eliot to write the nearest English equivalent to Rimbaud's great poem.

Such a comparison can hardly be pushed even so far without distortion; neither periods nor personalities are interchangeable. But it is not wholly a matter of personality that, out of the defeated and humiliated France in which he grew up, as well as out of his own repudiation of his culture, his society, and his normal identity, Rimbaud was able to gather a masterpiece. But when Crane came to the height of his powers in an America that was extravagantly successful, extravagantly rich, extravagantly "free," he lost faith in his own desire to celebrate it—by which time he was also too demoralized to reject it. It was not wholly the poet's failure; the commercialization of values in the 20's had made even a poetry of revolt difficult, and Crane was not equipped for the effort of total rejection.

Remembering this fact, and savoring the irony of Karl Shapiro's description of Crane as "the poet of our industrial success," one can see a certain gross propriety in Mr. Weber's book.

Crane's poetic history ran the length of that other Boom (he jumped into the sea at the depth of the depression). The same commercialization of values which helped to confuse and dismay Crane is currently at work again, and its infection has helped author and publisher to inflate what should have been a modest study of some of Crane's published and hitherto unpublished pieces into a bulky and slovenly book that shows no respect whatever for the standards of that small audience that is likely to read any book about Crane.

WEBER'S *Crane* is a crude first draft, heavily padded, but apparently neither revised for publication nor adequately proof-read. Its pages are rich with misprints, misused words, and sentences devoid of syntax. (One reads of the "recondition" of Ezra Pound, for "reconditeness," and of the "obliquity" of modern poets, which is an interesting point, but out of key with its context.) The whole is written in a style of mixed-up clichés and sloppy circumlocution—bookpage journalese in which Crane's image, when it emerges as more than a blur, is parodied. (Talking of Crane's homosexuality, Mr. Weber undertakes to list some of his "feminine aspects" for us: "he was generous and sympathetic, fond of children, fastidious in his grooming and devoted to cleanliness. . . .")

Ten years ago, Philip Horton published his *Hart Crane: the Life of an American Poet*. Re-reading it today, one confirms the impression that Horton had met admirably the specifications of his subtitle: he has given us not only the figure of Crane, but Crane in the context of his period. Weber's "biographical" passages, with their lopsided emphasis on Crane's collapses and hysterics, add nothing to Horton's portrait. His critical contribution is better, but incomplete and wordy.

The difficulties Crane's poems present are rarely those of the central "thought." They sometimes come from the ambiguity—rather than the complexity—of his organization; most often from the expression of a unique sensibility through an extreme reach of allusion and metaphor. So far as it can be done, Crane's obscurities, which are sometimes wholly private or partly incoherent, must be adumbrated line by line. Mr. Weber attempts this with certain passages in Crane's more important poems, but does not carry through with any of them. Elsewhere, he offers synopses and appreciations.

However, one cannot read any book about

Crane, even an unsatisfactory one, without a more poignant awareness of the cost which his society (in part) exacted from Crane for his achievements, and how much it limited them. And the 20's are merely one extreme example of what can happen in a democratic society whose values, proposed for celebration in art, are so drastically re-evaluated in the market.

The Conquerors

SMALL VICTORY. By ZELDA POPKIN. New York, Lippincott, 1947. 280 pp. \$2.75.

STRAW TO MAKE BRICK. By ALAN MARCUS. New York; Little, Brown, 1947. 435 pp. \$3.00.

Reviewed by RUTH F. BOORSTIN

THESE novels deal with the attempts of men in the American Military Government to de-Nazify and reconstruct the Germans in their conquered villages. The books are not very significant as literary accomplishments, but they do grapple with a real problem. Both are stories of retreat, of bungling and cynicism, of irresponsibility, hypocrisy, and timidity.

Mrs. Popkin tries to sentimentalize this retreat into a "small victory" comforting to the hearts of the circulating-library set. The result is a mediocre and unconvincing novel. After all, she asks, isn't life at best a strategic retreat?—this is what cleancut Dr. Randolph Barlow concludes when, fresh from his cloistered teaching job in a small Southern college, he learns in Frankfurt what a rough bawdy world this really is. The moral is: "You're just one small guy. Learn to take the bad with the good. We're doing the best we can." This pragmatic solution to the dilemma of two bad alternatives, intertwined with a Platonic little love story, does not carry much weight. Mrs. Popkin seems to be urging upon us half a loaf of rather mildewed bread.

Unlike Mrs. Popkin's novel, Alan Marcus' *Straw to Make Brick* does not wince from concluding that retreat into compromise does spell defeat, and that the lesson of such defeats is primarily the necessity not to desist from the fight even though victory is impossible. His novel makes depressing, at times even painful, reading—which indicates at least a minimum of aesthetic achievement. He does more than suggest the complicated moral problems involved

in administering an occupied area with justice but without hate. He properly insists that although our attempts to remake a world may show up the flaws of our own premises, we are not free passively to let available alternatives determine our choice.

Marcus does not allow his characters the luxury of moralizing about little victories being better than none. When Major Christopher, for all his ability and good intentions, is frustrated by army inanity and red tape in his plans to hold a public trial for the worst of the local Nazis, he sees his defeat for what it is and, disheartened, asks to be sent home. Similarly, the problem confronting young Corporal Gordon, who, hating the Nazis and believing that all Germans are Nazis, falls in love with gentle Elsa Bruner, is not blurred by a happy ending.

Reconciliation and mutual understanding, Marcus tells us, are scarcely possible for the Americans. They are not made for conquerors. Since they preach a democracy that they do not practice wholeheartedly at home, their human salvage job becomes a farce. "Whoever has been a Nazi must now be punished, regardless of what his reasons were"—such a principle soon proves to be unenforceable. The task of finding Germans of genuine democratic sympathies is similarly difficult. The Jewish grave-stones stolen from the burial grounds are finally discovered in the house of Herr Hofstetter, who had been made Landrat by the Americans after the most painstaking investigation of his political past. The idealists go back disgusted to the United States, or get themselves transferred to other departments. But the hope that there are others to hammer away at the hypocrisy and red-tape continues. As one character says, half-ironically, "There are good men coming. There are many good men."

The contrast between the moral levels of these two novels is only too apparent. In the experienced vein of the professional writer, Mrs. Popkin gives her readers what they can digest; her message of compromise is appealing to all who find that the adult world is not one of free choices. She is out to help good people, who must daily swallow little stupidities and injustices, to justify themselves. Mr. Marcus, with exuberant disillusionment, sees the Americans in Germany illustrating the futility of the small victories of "practical men" everywhere; he casts his vote against what Thoreau called "the lives of quiet desperation" led by those who drift with the stream.

Journey from Home

THE GLORY OF THY PEOPLE: THE STORY OF A CONVERSION. By FATHER M. RAPHAEL SIMON. New York, Macmillan, 1948. 139 pp. \$2.00.

Reviewed by SHOLOM J. KAHN

FATHER SIMON tells the story of his conversion with a simple directness that evokes respect. Starting in New York City in 1909, his quiet "apologia" takes us briefly through what seems to have been a colorless youth as a Reform Jew; through an education that traversed the universities of Michigan, Berlin, and Chicago, and the University of Michigan Medical School, from which he emerged as a practicing psychiatrist; to "God's Kingdom" and a "Fulfillment" which finally brought him to his present life as a Trappist monk of the "Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance." This was a journey indeed, and its details are told effectively, with a minimum of self-display.

As Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen points out in his preface, Father Simon's volume is particularly interesting because "it comes from the pen of a scientist and a Jew." However, the story does *not* end "with the scientist becoming more scientific than ever, and the Jew still more of a Jew," despite the sincerity with which this somewhat fantastic argument is urged.

FIRST for the science. Dissatisfied with his miscellaneous courses as an undergraduate at the University of Michigan, the young Simon got some "glimpses of the secret Kingdom of Truth" through a year of study at the University of Berlin—luckily in 1929, before German Idealism underwent its perversion into National Socialism. Introduced to the "true philosophy" (of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas) during his years in medical school, he spent two post-graduate years at the University of Chicago, making "a philosophical study of medicine" in collaboration with Richard McKeon, and there discovered the power in "traditional philosophy for providing order for modern sciences."

Here we begin to see the nature of the search that eventually led Dr. Simon to a Trappist monastery. Key words for his intellectual history are "order," "unity," "eternal truth," and finally "authority"—the authority of the Church and Aristotle. One typical example of the scientific blind alleys into which "authority" led Dr.

Simon may be briefly cited. Impressed by the "simplicity and uniformity" of things, he rehearses some of the familiar arguments against Darwin's evolutionary explanation of the "origin of species"; and a footnote reveals that the Catholic Church "tolerates" (whatever that may mean in science) an alternative explanation referred to as "the mitigated theory of evolution." Men should formulate "eternal truths" if they think they can be found or have been revealed, but they had better not confuse such formulations with science, which, if it means anything at all, must mean *free* inquiry into the vast (and probably changing) world of facts.

As for Dr. Simon's Jewishness, he was a "convert," but not a "proselyte"; that is, he did not leave a strong Jewish faith to become a Catholic; Catholicism filled a vacuum in his life and was the only religion he ever really practiced.

Father Simon does indeed write that his early religious education in the Reform synagogue "was such as to imbue me with a great admiration for my persecuted people who, refusing to change their religion, were put to death crying, 'Hear! O Israel! The Lord our God, the Lord is one!'" But his entire first chapter, describing a mere Sunday school acquaintance with Jewish history, shows no recognition of Jewishness as the rich way of life it can be.

Similarly, Dr. Simon's road to religious conversion was singularly unmarked by knowledge of the classic literature of Judaism. Under other circumstances, his passionate desire for unity and moral order might have led, for example, to Maimonides' *Guide for the Perplexed*, which attempts to reconcile Aristotle's philosophy with Jewish Orthodoxy; to Judah Halevi's *Kuzari*, which discusses the relative merits of Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism; and to a host of others. He might have sought out the Jewish, rather than the Catholic, visions of perfection in the Old Testament, the Talmud, and the rich literature of the Midrash, and his sense of "the sublime destiny open to the poor" might have been aroused by the doctrines and folklore of the pious Hasidim.

Instead, as a result of his previous thorough cultural assimilation, once he had come to believe in the divinity of Jesus, he came to accept completely the Catholic version of Jewish history and the distortions of Catholic apologetics. The Old Testament became important to him, not as the spiritual Odyssey of his people, but for the passages that are taken as predictions of the coming of Jesus; and, by that curious

kind of transformation of which the Church is master, the twenty-first Psalm of David becomes a description of the Crucifixion. Again, the days of the Spanish Inquisition, that time of special horror for Jews, become, in Father Simon's eyes, a time when "the Papal lands were open to persecuted Jews as a place of refuge and . . . they had received kind treatment." Most curious of all, he came to see the Church as "the unique custodian . . . of civil rights" (which were developed in Catholic England and Catholic Europe), blandly ignoring centuries of reformation, revolution, and American history.

Some of the persuasiveness of the point of view developed through Father Simon's story may derive from the germs of truth it contains. Our intellectual and educational worlds are unduly fragmented, and many American Jews share the young Simon's inadequate preparation for facing the realities of their lives. There is a hollow, but familiar, ring of truth in the first chapter's characterization of his Jewish education: Jewish feelings of restlessness, emptiness, and alienation have become increasingly prevalent, and our Jewish spiritual leadership has become correspondingly spineless, though it is not easy to pin the blame for this on any particular individuals or groups.

But the Catholic Church is surely not alone in its recognition of the need for synthesis in the sciences; and there is no lack of soul-searching these days by American Jews. For many of us, the Church's certainty that its doctrines—and its doctrines alone—will solve so many problems outside its proper domain must seem an example of that sin of pride which the Church itself regards as cardinal. Hopefully, the Jew will work out his destiny in his own characteristic way; and if order and unity in science is the goal, it had better be sought by the thoughtful scientists, and not by theologians.

Monsignor Sheen writes in his preface: "Here is a man who went the whole way, who was content with no half-drawn swords, divided loyalties and compromising surrenders." Where, in this proud statement, is the spirit of the Prince of Peace? With unyielding fanaticisms bringing us close to a third world war, surely what we need is to learn how to sheathe our swords, to multiply our loyalties, and to practice the art of constructive compromise. In the search for peace, both the Jew and the scientist must play their parts; but Father Simon's conversion, however moving and sincere its story may be, did not make of him a better scientist or Jew. There is glory here, perhaps, but not of the scientific search, and not of "Thy People."

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